GLEANINGS
of
Past Years.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

VII.

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CONTENTS

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1843–79.

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VOL. VII.

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GLEANINGS OF PAST YEARS,

1843–79.

UNITED UNIVERSITY CLUB

BY THE RIGHT HON.

W. E. GLADSTONE. M.P.

MISCELLANEOUS.

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1879.

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I.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS: THE WORK OF UNIVERSITIES.

1860.

1. Principal, Professors, and Students of the University of Edinburgh,—I cannot estimate lightly the occasion on which I meet you, especially as it regards the younger and the larger part of my academical audience. The franchise, which you have exercised in my favour, is itself of a nature to draw attention; for the Legislature of our own day has, by a new deliberative Act, invested you, the youngest members of the University, with a definite and not inconsiderable influence in the formation of that Court, which is to exercise, upon appeal, the highest control over its proceedings. This is a measure, which would hardly have been adopted in any other land than our own. Yet it is also one, in the best sense, agreeable to the spirit of our country and of its institutions; for we think it eminently British to admit the voice of the governed in the choice of governors; to seek, through diversity of elements, for harmony and unity of result; and to train men for the discharge of manly duties by letting them begin their exercise betimes.

2. You have chosen, gentlemen, as your own representative in the University Court, one widely enough

separated from you in the scale of years; one to whom much of that is past, which to you is as yet future. It is fitting, then, that he should speak to you on such an occasion as that which unites us together—namely, the work of the University, as a great organ of preparation for after life; and that, in treating of what constitutes the great bond between us, he should desire and endeavour to assist in arming you, as far as he may, for the efforts and trials of your several careers.

3. Subject to certain cycles of partial revolution, it is true that, as in the material so in the moral world, every generation of men is a labourer for that which is to succeed it, and makes an addition to that great sum-total of achieved results, which may, in commercial phrase, be called the capital of the race. Of all the conditions of existence in which man differs from the brutes, there is not one of greater moment than this, that each one of them commences life as if he were the first of a species, whereas man inherits largely from those who have gone before. How largely, none of us can say; but my belief is that, as years gather more and more upon you, you will estimate more and more highly your debt to preceding ages. If, on the one hand, that debt is capable of being exaggerated or misapprehended; if arguments are sometimes strangely used which would imply that, because they have done much, we ought to do nothing more; yet, on the other hand, it is no less true that the obligation is one so vast and manifold, that it can never as a whole be adequately measured. It is not only in possessions, available for use, enjoyment, and security; it is not only in language, laws, institutions, arts, religion; it is not only in what we have; but in what we are. For, as character is formed by the action and reaction of the

human being and the circumstances in which he lives, it follows that, as those circumstances vary, he alters too; and he transmits a modified—it ought to be also an expanded and expanding—nature onwards in his turn to his posterity, under that profound law which establishes, between every generation and its predecessors, a moral as well as a physical association.

4. In what degree this process is marred, on the one hand, by the perversity and by the infirmity of man, or restored and extended, on the other, by the remedial provisions of the Divine mercy, this is not the place to inquire. The progress of mankind is, upon the whole, a chequered and an intercepted progress; and even where it is full formed, still, just as in the individual youth has charms, that maturity under an inexorable law must lose, so the earlier ages of the world will ever continue to delight and instruct us by beauties that are exclusively or peculiarly their own. Again, it would seem as though this progress (and here is a chastening and a humbling thought) were a progress of mankind, and not of the individual man; for it seems to be quite clear that whatever be the comparative greatness of the race now and in its infant or early stages, what may be called the normal specimens, so far as they have been made known to us either through external form or through the works of the intellect, have tended rather to dwindle, or at least to diminish, than to grow in the highest elements of greatness.

5. But the exceptions, at which these remarks have glanced, neither destroy nor materially weaken the profound moment of the broad and universal canon, that every generation of men, as they traverse the vale of life, are bound to accumulate, and in divers manners do

accumulate, new treasures for the race; and to leave the world richer, on their departure, for the advantage of their descendants, than, on their entrance, they themselves had found it. Of the mental portion of this treasure no small part is stored—and of the continuous work I have described no small part is performed—by Universities; which have been, I venture to say, entitled to rank among the greater lights and glories of Christendom.

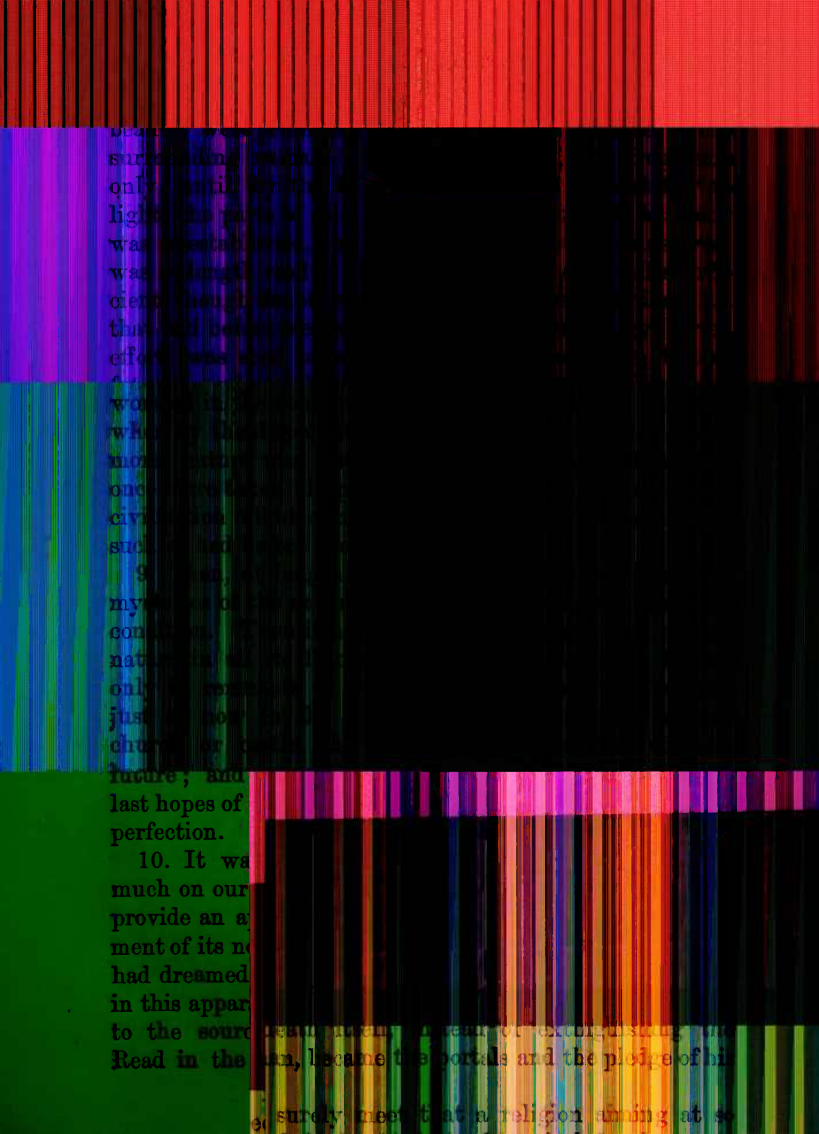
6. It is, I believe, a fact, and if so, it is a fact highly instructive and suggestive, that the University, as such, is a Christian institution.* The Greeks, indeed, had the very largest ideas upon the training of man, and produced specimens of our kind with gifts that have never been surpassed. But the nature of man, such as they knew it, was scarcely at all devoloped, nay, it was maimed, in its supreme capacity—in its relations towards God. Hence, as in the visions of the prophet, so upon the roll of history, the imposing fabrics of ancient civilisation never have endured. Greece has bequeathed to us her ever-living tongue, and the immortal productions of her intellect. Rome made ready for Christendom the elements of polity and law; but the brilliant assemblage of endowments, which constitutes civilisation, having no root in itself, could not brook the shocks of time and vicissitude; it came and it went; it was seen and it was gone: *Hunc tantum terris ostendent fata; neque ultra esse sinent.*

7. We now watch, gentlemen, with a trembling hope, the course of that later and Christian civilisation, which arose out of the ashes of the old heathen world, and ask

* [A partial allowance ought here to have been made, perhaps for Athens, certainly for Alexandria. See Cardinal Newman's delightful volume 'On the Office and Work of Universities.'—W. E. G., 1879.]

ourselves whether, like the Gospel itself, so that which the Gospel has wrought beyond itself in the manners, arts, laws, and institutions of men, is in such manner and degree salted with perpetual life, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? Will the civilisation, which was springing upwards from the days of Charlemagne, and which now, over the face of Europe and America, seems to present to us in bewildering conflict the mingled signs of decrepitude and vigour, perish like its older types, and, like them, be known thereafter only in its fragments? Or does it bear a charmed life, and will it give shade from the heat, and shelter from the storm, to all generations of men?

8. In any answer to such a question, it would perhaps be easier to say what would not, than what would, be involved. But some things we may observe, which may count among the materials of a reply. The arts of war are now so allied with those of peace, that barbarism, once so terrible, is reduced to comparative impotence; and what civilised man has had the wit to create, he has also the strength to defend. Thus one grand destructive agency is paralysed. Time, indeed, is the great destroyer; but his power, too, is greatly neutralized by printing, by commerce which lays the foundations of friendship among nations, by the ease of communication which binds men together, by that diffusion of intelligence which multiplies the natural guardians of civilisation. These are, perhaps, not merely isolated phenomena. Perhaps they are but witnesses, and but a few among many witnesses, to the vast change which has been wrought, since the Advent of our Lord, in the state of man. Perhaps they re-echo to us the truth that, apart from sound and sure relations to its Maker, the fitful efforts of mankind must needs be



University among the great institutions of Christian civilisation is a phenomenon of no common interest. Let us see whether, itself among the historical results of Christianity, it does not vindicate its origin, and repay, so to speak, its θρεπτρά, the debt of its birth and training, by the service that it renders to the great work of human cultivation.

11. I do not enter, gentlemen, into the question from what source the University etymologically derives its name. At the very least, it is a name most aptly symbolizing the purpose, for which the thing itself exists. For the work of the University as such covers the whole field of knowledge, human and divine; the whole field of our nature in all its powers; the whole field of time, in binding together successive generations as they pass onwards in the prosecution of their common destiny; aiding each both to sow its proper seed, and to reap its proper harvest from what has been sown before; storing up into its own treasure-house the spoils of every new venture in the domain of mental enterprise, and ever binding the present to pay over to the future an acknowledgment at least of the debt which for itself it owes the past.

12. If the work of improvement in human society under Christian influences be a continuous and progressive work, then we can well conceive why the King's daughter, foreshadowed in Holy Writ, has counted the University among her handmaids. If, apart from what may be the counsels of Providence as to ultimate success, it lay essentially in the nature of Christianity that it should aim at nothing less than the entire regeneration of human nature and society, such a conception as that of the University was surely her appropriate ally. Think as we will upon the movement of man's life and the

course of his destiny, there is a fit association, and a noble and lofty harmony, between the greatest gift of the Almighty to our race, on the one hand, and the subordinate but momentous ministries of those chief institutions of learning and education, the business of one among which has gathered us to-day.

13. The idea of the University, as we find it historically presented to us in the middle age, was to methodize, perpetuate, and apply all knowledge which existed, and to adopt and take up into itself every new branch as it came successively into existence. These various kinds of knowledge were applied for the various uses of life, such as the time apprehended them. But the great truth was always held, and always kept in the centre of the system, that man himself is the crowning wonder of creation; that the study of his nature is the noblest study that the world affords; and that, to his advancement and improvement, all undertakings, all professions, all arts, all knowledge, all institutions are subordinated, as means and instruments to their end.

14. The old and established principle was that the University had its base in the Faculty of Arts; *Universitas fundata est in artibus.* It was not meant by this maxim that the Faculty of Arts was to have precedence over all other faculties, for this honour was naturally, and justly, accorded to Theology; both, we may suppose, because of the dignity of its subject-matter, which well may place it at the head of all human knowledge, and because it was, so to speak, in possession of the ground, and in the exercise of very powerful influence, at the period when the less organized institutions for teaching began to develop themselves into their final form of Universities.

15. But the University was founded in the principle of universal culture, and the name Arts was intended to embrace every description of knowledge that, rising above mere handicraft, could contribute to train the mind and faculties of man. To say, then, that the University was founded in Arts, was to assert the universality of its work. The assertion was not less true, nor less far-sighted, because those who first made it may not have been conscious of its comprehending more than the studies of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, which included Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy. This catalogue is indeed a brief one, as compared with the countless branches of modern study; yet within its narrow bounds it contains in principle, at the least, the philosophy of speech, the philosophy of the mind, the mathematical sciences, pure and mixed, and the Fine Arts. It is both more easy and more rational, all circumstances taken into view, to admire the vastness of the conception of the University, than to wonder that it was at first but partially unfolded and applied.

16. The sincerity, the sagacity, the energy of purpose, with which the old Universities were designed and organized may be discerned, as in other ways, so by the progressive expansion of their studies. The Roman law, after remaining long almost forgotten, became known anew to Europe; and as it grew to be a study, the Universities provided for it with their faculty of laws; and with those Degrees, Principal and Professors, which call this day for my grateful appreciation.* Again, when the final triumph of barbarism at Con-

* The degree of Doctor of Laws had just been conferred upon me as Rector.

stantinople compelled Greek learning to seek a home in the West, provision began to be made forthwith in Universities for its reception. I think my distinguished brother, if I may presume so to call him (Professor Mansell), could tell us that one of the first of those foundations was made in the very College at Oxford, which he himself adorns. And the study, of which Greek learning is the main and most fruitful as well as the most arduous part, made its way, under the well-deserved name of Humanity, to the very head of the Faculty of Arts. When in all physical science man, guided in no small degree by our own illustrious Bacon, became content (in Bacon's language) to acknowledge himself only the servant and interpreter of Nature,* and to walk in the paths of patient observation, the ground was laid first for that Faculty of Medicine, which has attained in the University of Edinburgh to a distinction destined, I hope, to be as long-lived as it is without doubt beyond the common.

17. We can hardly expect that human institutions should, without limit of time, retain the flexible and elastic tissues of their youth. Moreover, Universities in particular, as they have grown old and great, have come to interlace at many points with the interests and concerns of that outer world, which has but little sympathy with their proper work. But for these and such like causes, they might have displayed at this day an organization as complete, relatively to the present state of knowledge and inquiry, as was that which they possessed some centuries ago.

18. The older history of the Universities of Europe not

* *Novum Organon*, § 1.

only presents many features of the utmost interest, but upon the whole inspires satisfaction, and challenges praise from the impartial observer.

I might detain you long, gentlemen, upon the various kinds of good they did, and I might search long without discovering any characteristic evils to set down against it. What the castle was to the feudal Baron, what the guild was to the infant middle-class, they were to knowledge and to mental freedom; nor was it only that from them local culture received local shelter, and enjoyed through them an immunity from the assaults of barbarism in its vicinity: they established, so to speak, a telegraph for the mind; and all the elements of intellectual culture, scattered throughout Europe, were brought by them into near communion. They established a great brotherhood of the understanding. Without a visible head, or a coercive law, or a perilous tendency to aggression, they did for the mind of man what the unity of the Roman Church aimed at doing for his soul. They did it by the strong sympathy of an inward life, and by a common interest and impulse, such, from their nature, as were the least capable of being directed to perverse or dangerous ends.

19. The conditions, under which they existed, did not, indeed, permit them to supply the materials of any combination formidable to other social powers, acting each in its proper sphere; for they were on every side watched by jealous interests, and they were kept at once in check and in activity by competition. The monasteries for the Church, and the legal and medical professions with their special establishments of practical education, as they were matured in the advance of time, precluded any undue ascendancy; while in these seats themselves there were

embodied such effectual preservatives against excess and disorder, that human knowledge was in them regarded as a whole, and its various branches had, from their very neighbourhood, better definitions of their proper provinces, and of their mutual relations.

20. In whatever light we view them, there was a completeness in the idea and work of Universities, in proportion as their proper development was attained, which may well excite our wonder. They aimed alike, as we have seen, at the preservation of all old learning, and at the development and appropriation of all new. They bound themselves to prosecute alike those studies which fit men for the professions and the daily needs of life, and those which terminate upon man himself, whether by the investigation of truth, or by the pursuit of refinement. They bore, and indeed they still bear, a character at once conservative and progressive. If not uniformly, yet in general, their influence tended to mitigate extreme opinions. The Papal power, for example, knew no more formidable curb than the great University of Paris; and in England it was the special privilege of Oxford to rear up many centuries ago very eminent men, needed in their day, of the class who have been well described, by a German writer, as Reformers before the Reformation.

21. These were especially men of action. But in both of the Universities I have named—and they are, I think, the two placed by Huber at the head of all the Northern Universities—there were also reared many personages of the first order in power of thought, who discussed even the highest subjects with a freedom, as well as a force, much beyond what has been tolerated in the Latin Church since the alarm and shock of the Reformation. Of all these, the best-known name to modern ears is

Abelard; for it is associated with a romantic tale of passion and of suffering, which some, and even some famous, writers have not thought it beneath them somewhat brutally to degrade. But quite apart from the profound and sad interest, and the warning lessons of his history, he was a man that gave to the human mind one of those enduring impulses whose effects remain long after their source has been forgotten, and influence the course of thought, and through thought of action, after many generations.

22. Universities were, in truth, a great mediating power between the high and the low, between the old and the new, between speculation and practice, between authority and freedom. Of these last words, in their application to the political sphere, modern history, and the experience of our own time, afford abundant exemplification. In countries which enjoy political liberty, the Universities are usually firm supports of the established order of things; but in countries under absolute government they acquire a bias towards innovation. Some excess may be noted in these tendencies respectively; but, in the main, they bear witness against greater and more pernicious excesses. To take instances: the University of Edinburgh did not very easily accommodate itself to the Revolution of 1688; it was long in the eighteenth century before Cambridge returned Whig representatives to Parliament; and I believe the very latest of the Jacobite risings and riots occurred in Oxford. On the other hand, in some continental countries it has been the practice, during the present century, when the political horizon threatened, at once to close the Universities as the probable centres of agitation; a proceeding so strange, according to our ideas and experience, that

the statement may sound hardly credible. Even within the last few weeks, we may all have seen notices, in the public journals, of movements in the University of Rome itself, adverse to the Pontifical Government.

23. It is in itself deeply interesting, and it should augment our thankfulness for the ample liberties we now enjoy, to trace them back to their cradle. At one time we find nobles; at another, country gentlemen; at another, burgesses, engaged in the struggle against arbitrary power. But nowhere in the ancient history of this country is more deeply engraven her unconquerable love of freedom, than in the constitution and history of her Universities. Each of them, as a brotherhood, bound together by the noble bond of learning, was a standing and living protest against the domination of mere wealth, and of over-weening force, in all their forms; and they strengthened themselves for their conflict by the freedom of their arrangements, both of teaching and of discipline. As respects teaching, I neither define nor dispute the changes that the altered conditions of modern society may have required; but I think there is no doubt, that, in proportion as we can give a just freedom to teaching by introducing into it the element of a wholesome competition, do we approach more closely to the primitive spirit and system of Universities. As to discipline, we may read the aversion of our forefathers to all slavish formalism in the personal freedom which has been allowed to students; in that curious distribution of them into Nations, which appears to have aimed at a system of self-government combined with pupilage; in the occasional dangers, sometimes for the moment serious enough, to the public peace, which occurred from time to time; and lastly, let me say, in those suffrages which have so

long been enjoyed in Scotland, and which have been extended to you under the authority of Parliament.

24. It is indeed a fashion with some to ridicule the method of disputation which was in use for testing talents and acquirements. I demur to the propriety of the proceeding. It might be as just to ridicule the clumsiness of their weapons, or their tools. These disputations were clumsy weapons; but the question after all is, how did the men use them? Let us confess it, the defect was more than made good by the zeal with which in those times learning was pursued. Their true test is in the capacity and vigour which they gave to the mind, and this trial they can well abide. [Further, they involved a noteworthy tribute to the principle of freedom. And there was something not sound only, but felicitous, in the opening they afforded for the inquiring mind to range freely over the field of argument, without more than a provisional adherence to a thesis; whereas our modes of individual authorship, working through the press, have a tendency prematurely to wed us to our conclusions, before we have had an opportunity of weighing the objections that others may oppose to them.*]

25. The sketch which I have endeavoured to give, though longer than I could wish, yet, touching as it does a subject of vast and varied interest, is, I admit, both slight and general, and would require much adaptation in detail to make it exactly suit each case. But it is essentially a picture of the past. *Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.* The simple forms, into which society was cast at the time when Universities were equal to their work, have given place to a more extended

* Added in 1879.

and elaborate organization, in the midst of greatly multiplied wants; and the very same state of society which now makes immensely enlarged demands on its establishments of learning and education, has likewise reduced the means of supplying them. For those prizes of talent and energy, and those opportunities of attaining even to colossal fortune, with which the outer walks of life now abound, have bid down the modest emoluments which science and learning offer within the precincts of Universities, have altered the prevailing tone of mind with respect to knowledge, and have disposed the overwhelming mass of those who seek for education, to seek it not for its own sake, but for the sake simply of its bearing on the professions and pursuits of life.

26. Amidst a warm glow of reverence, gratitude, and attachment, there is discontent with the existing Universities, and a sense that they do not perform all their work. Part of this discontent is exacting and unreasonable; another part of it is justified by a comparison of the means which all or some of them possess with their performances, and ought to be met and to be removed. But besides the two forms of discontent I have named, there is a third, which is neither irrational like the first, nor yet remediable like the second.

27. There must always be, especially in the most luminous and the most energetic minds, a sense of deficiency which we may properly call discontent in regard to the shortcomings of Universities, when they are put to the test of measurement beside the abstract and lofty standard supplied by their conception, their aim, and their older history. The truth is, that that standard is one which it surpasses the wit of man to reach, especially in a period marked, as is this of ours, by a restless

activity of the human spirit. For let us remember that it is the proper work of Universities, could they but perform it, while they guard and cultivate all ancient truth, to keep themselves in the foremost ranks of modern discovery, to harmonize continually the inherited with the acquired wealth of mankind, and to give a charter to freedom of discussion, while they maintain the reasonable limits of the domain, which belongs to tradition and authority.

28. The question, how far endowments for education* are to be desired, is beset with peculiar difficulty. Where they are small and remote from public observation, they tend rapidly to torpor. They are admirable where they come in aid of a good-will already existing, but where the good-will does not exist beforehand, they are as likely to stifle as to stimulate its growth. They make a high cultivation accessible to the youth who desires it, and who could not otherwise attain his worthy and noble end; on the other hand, they remove the spur by which Providence neutralizes the indolence of man, and moves him to supply his wants. If the teacher, when unendowed, may be constrained to forego all high training

* [In these paragraphs (28–34) I endeavoured to state dispassionately some of the leading considerations, which tell for and against endowments. The question is one of vast and growing interest. There is no proposition, advanced in the text, that I should now desire to withdraw. But the further experience and reflection of near a score of years have somewhat tended to incline the balance of my mind in favour of voluntary action. I should, however, be disposed to except even from this qualified sentence—(1) buildings, libraries, and the like; (2) very moderate but numerous initial provisions for commencing students; (3) endowment of branches of learning, rare yet valuable, for which the public sense of value may not supply in the open market an adequate demand. All that lies beyond these points I must be content to leave in doubt.—W. E. G., 1879.]

for students, and to provide only for their lower and more immediate demands; on the other hand, the teacher, when endowed, and in so far as he is endowed, is deprived of the aid which personal interest and private necessities can lend to the sense of duty, and he may be tempted to neglect, or to minister but feebly to, the culture of his pupils, either in its higher or in its lower sense.

29. And it is never to be forgotten, that amidst all the kinds of exertion incident to our human state, there is none more arduous, none more exhausting, than the work of teaching when worthily performed. Some men, indeed, possess in this department a princely gift, which operates like a charm upon the young; and they follow such an one, as soldiers follow their leader when he waves the banner of their native land before their eyes. But such men are rare; they are not less rare than are great men in any other walk of life. Speaking generally, the work of teaching is, even when pursued with the whole heart, even when felt to be an absorbing work, but moderately successful; while he, who teaches with but half his heart, does not really teach at all.

30. There are, however, considerations which tell on the other side. The solidity of establishments founded on old endowments supplies a basis on which there are gradually formed a mass of continuous traditions, always powerful and generally noble; and the very name of them, as it is handed on from generation to generation, becomes a watchword at once of affectionate remembrances and of lofty aspirations. They lay hold of the young by those properties, which are the finest characteristics of youth; and in our happy country the boy, when he is enrolled as a member of one of these institutions, feels

that he is admitted to a share in a great inheritance, and instinctively burns to be worthy of the badge he has assumed.

31. Again, in a country which, like this, is both free and wealthy, all endowed institutions are open to the competition of the unendowed, and few establishments are so amply endowed as not to leave room for the operation on the teacher of those ordinary motives which prompt him to better his condition. This remark is eminently applicable to the Universities in Scotland.

32. It is indeed alleged, and I think with truth, that the ancient Universities of England, with their magnificent endowments, do not effect so much as they ought on behalf either of education or of learning. With the spirit of improvement which now rules in them, and with the powerful aid which the Legislature has given for the more free and efficacious use of their property, I believe that they will both further enlarge their field, and plough it more deeply. But when all has been done that we can reasonably hope, the results will still seem small when compared with those produced in other times, and in other countries; they will still give rise to disappointment.

33. Let it not, on that account, be concluded that it would be well to strip these great and ancient foundations of their trappings. The real merits, the real performances of Universities, cannot be fairly judged except by first fairly measuring the strength of the competing power, that of the outer world, in all its busy spheres. The fact that a hundred pounds will not bring as much learning in England, or even in Scotland, as in Germany, is no more conclusive of this case than the fact that neither will the same sum buy as many eggs; not

because eggs are more scarce, but because money is more abundant.

34. It may be, though I will not presume to assert positively it is, that the endowments of learning in our own country do but redress, and that partially, the relative disadvantage at which, but for them, learning itself must have been placed by the increased attractions, and multiplied openings, which the exterior spheres of modern life supply. This, however, we all must feel; that now is the time when it befits every teacher, and every student, connected with all these great and venerable institutions, to bestir himself, and to refute, at least in his own person, the charge that endowment gravitates towards torpor as its natural consummation; if indeed we desire that, in a critical though not an unkindly age, the Universities should still enjoy that intelligent respect, which has been paid them by so many generations.

35. I have been assuming, all along, that all Universities are united by a paramount bond of common interest, and I have therefore discussed them at large. If now we contract our view to the Universities of Scotland, or if again we bring it yet nearer home, and look at Edinburgh alone, we have the consolation of thinking that Envy herself can scarcely charge either the whole of them, or this one in particular, with an abuse of wealth. In the history of the University of Edinburgh, we may clearly trace the national character of Scotland. We find here all that hardy energy, that gift of extracting much from little, and husbanding every available provision, of supplying the defects of external appliances and means from within by the augmented effort and courage of man, that power to make an ungenial climate smile, and a hungry

soil teem with all the bounties of Providence, which have given to Scotland a place and a name among men so far beyond what was due to her geographical extent, or to her natural resources. The progress of this University during the last century (I strive to speak impartially) is truly wonderful: from the days of Carstairs, Pitcairn, Monro, and Sibbald, at its beginning, to those of Brown and Stewart, of Robertson and Blair, of Cullen and the second Monro, of Black, of Playfair, of Robison, of Sir William Hamilton, and many others both before and since its close.

36. It would be most unjust, in any review of the fortunes of the University, not to notice that great peculiarity in its condition; its subjection to the local municipal authority. I speak, gentlemen, of what history tells. I have stated that it is the business of Universities to give a charter to freedom of discussion; and I am sure you will allow me to say that, without prejudice, this is the impression that a perusal of the ancient history of Edinburgh makes on my mind. In lieu of Sovereigns, and great nobles and prelates, for patrons, Visitors, Chancellors, and the like, the University of Edinburgh, as a general rule, could look no farther and no higher than to the Council of the "good town" itself. A relation, originally intended for a great secondary school, survived that stage of the career of the institution, and continued to influence its affairs, when it had become to all intents and purposes a University; and I must say, that the history of this relation appears to be highly honourable to all parties concerned. On the side of the teaching body, we commonly find deference and trust. On the side of the superintending corporation, in generations gone by—for the present is not within the sphere of my

discussion—we find patronage effectively and intelligently exercised, and the most assiduous and friendly care bestowed in improving and enlarging the organization. I speak with the freedom of historical inquiry, nay with chartered freedom of discussion, as before an academic audience: modern times do not fall within my province: but I must say, in looking to the past, that it will indeed be easier for the Town Council of our own day, in the discharge of the large and important share of governing duties that are still lodged in its hands, to fall below, than to rise above, the level of those who preceded it in the critical times anterior and subsequent to the Legislative Union.

37. And now, my younger friends, you to whom I owe the distinction of the office which enables and requires me to address you, if I have dwelt thus at length upon the character and scope of Universities, and their place in the scheme of Christian civilisation, it is in order that, setting before you the dignity that belongs to them, and that is reflected on their members, and the great opportunities which they offer, both of advancement and of improvement, I might chiefly suggest and impress by facts, which may be more eloquent than precepts, the responsibilities that are laid upon you by the enjoyment of these gifts and blessings.

38. Much, however, might be said to you on the acquisition of the knowledge which will be directly serviceable to you in your several professions. Much on the immense value of that kind of training, in which the subjects learned have for their chief aim not to inure the hand (so to speak) to the use of its tools in some particular art, but to operate on the mind itself, and, by making it flexible, manifold, and strong, to endow it with a general

aptitude for the duties and exigencies of life. Much, lastly, on the frame of spirit, in which you should pursue your work. Of these three branches, the topics belonging to the first are the most obvious and simple, for it requires no argument to persuade the workman, that he must be duly furnished with his tools, and must know how to handle them.

39. The reasons are less directly palpable which have made it the habit of our country to spend, where means permit, many precious years upon studies, which are void in a great degree of immediate bearing upon the intended occupations of our after life. There may, however, be the means of showing, first, that even the direct uses of the studies which you include under the general designation of humanity, are more considerable, when they are collected into one view, than might have been supposed; and, secondly, that the most distinguished professional men bear witness, with an overwhelming authority, in favour of a course of education, in which to train the mind shall be the first object, and to stock it only the second.

40. Man is to be trained chiefly by studying and by knowing man; and we are prepared for knowing man in life by learning him first in books, much as we are taught to draw from drawings, before we draw from nature. But if man is to be studied in books, he will best be studied in such books as present him to us in the largest, strongest, simplest, in a word, the most typical forms. These forms are principally found among the ancients.

41. Nor can the study of the ancients be dissociated from the study of their languages. There is a profound relation between thought and the investiture which it chooses for itself; and it is, as a general rule, most true,

that we cannot know men or nations unless we know their tongue. Diversity of language was, like labour, a temporal penalty inflicted on our race for sin; but being, like labour, originally penal, like labour it becomes, by the ordinance of God, a fertile source of blessing to those who use it aright. It is the instrument of thought, but it is not a blind or dead instrument; it is like the works in metal that Dædalus and Vulcan were fabled to produce; and, even as the limping deity was supported in his walk by his own nymphs of (so-called) brass, in like manner language reacts upon and bears up the thoughts from which it springs, and comes to take rank among the most effective powers for the discipline of the mind.

42. But more important than the quest of professional knowledge, more vital than the most effective intellectual training, is the remaining question of the temper and aim with which the youth prosecutes his work.

It is my privilege to be the first, who has ever thus addressed you in the capacity of Rector. But without doubt, your ears have caught the echo of those affectionate and weighty counsels, which the most eminent men of the age have not thought it beneath them to address to the students of a sister Scottish University. Let me remind you how one of European fame, who is now your and my academical superior, how the great jurist, orator, philosopher, and legislator, who is our Chancellor, how Lord Brougham besought the youth of Glasgow, as I in his words would more feebly, but not less earnestly, pray you, "to believe how incomparably the present season is verily and indeed the most precious of your whole lives," and how "every hour you squander here will," in other days, "rise up against you, and be paid for by years of bitter but unavailing regrets." Let me

recall to you the words of another Lord Rector of Glasgow, whose name is cherished in every cottage of his country, and whose strong sagacity, vast range of experience, and energy of will, were not one whit more eminent than the tenderness of his conscience, and his ever wakeful and wearing sense of public duty. Let me remind you how Sir Robert Peel, choosing from his quiver with a congenial forethought that shaft which was most likely to strike home, averred before the same academic audience what may as safely be declared to you, that "there is a presumption, amounting almost to certainty, that if any one of you will determine to be eminent in whatever profession you may choose, and will act with unvarying steadiness in pursuance of that determination, you will, if health and strength be given to you, infallibly succeed."

43. The mountain tops of Scotland behold on every side of them the witness, and many a one of what were once her morasses and her moorlands, now blossoming as the rose, carries on its face the proof, how truly it is in man and not in his circumstances that the secret of his destiny resides. For most of you that destiny will take its final bent towards evil or towards good, not from the information you imbibe, but from the habits of mind, thought, and life that you shall acquire, during your academical career. Could you with the bodily eye watch the moments of it as they fly, you would see them all pass by you, as the bee that has rifled the heather bears its honey through the air, charged with the promise, or it may be with the menace, of the future. In many things it is wise to believe before experience; to believe, until you may know; and believe me when I tell you that the thrift of time will repay you in after life with

an usury of profit beyond your most sanguine dreams, and that the waste of it will make you dwindle, alike in intellectual and in moral stature, beneath your darkest reckonings.

44. I am Scotchman enough to know that among you there are always many who are already, even in their tender years, fighting with a mature and manful courage the battle of life. When these feel themselves lonely amidst the crowd; when they are for a moment disheartened by that Difficulty which is the rude and rocking cradle of every kind of excellence; when they are conscious of the pinch of poverty and self-denial; let them be conscious, too, that a sleepless Eye is watching them from above, that their honest efforts are assisted, their humble prayers are heard, and all things are working together for their good. Is not this the life of faith, which walks by your side from your rising in the morning to your lying down at night; which lights up for you the cheerless world, and transfigures and glorifies all that you encounter, whatever be its outward form, with hues brought down from heaven?

45. These considerations are applicable to all of you. You are all in training here for educated life; for the higher forms of mental experience; for circles limited perhaps, but yet circles of social influence and leadership. Some of you may be chosen to greater distinctions and heavier trials, and may enter into that class of which each member, while he lives, is envied or admired;

> "And when he dies he leaves a lofty name,
> A light, a landmark, on the cliffs of fame."

And, gentlemen, the hope of an enduring fame is without doubt a powerful incentive to virtuous action, and you

may suffer it to float before you as a vision of refreshment, second always, and second with a long interval between, to your conscience and to the will of God. For an enduring fame is one stamped by the judgment of the future; of that future which dispels illusions, and smashes idols into dust. Little of what is criminal, little of what is idle, can endure even the first touch of the ordeal; it seems as though this purging power, following at the heels of man and trying his work, were a witness and a harbinger upon earth, of the great and final account.

46. So, then, the thirst of an enduring fame is near akin to the love of true excellence. But the fame of the moment is a dangerous possession, and a bastard motive; and he who does his acts in order that the echo of them may come back as a soft music in his ears, plays false to his noble destiny as a Christian man, places himself in continual danger of dallying with wrong, and taints even his virtuous actions at their source. Not the sublime words alone of the Son of God and His Apostles, but heathenism too, even while its vision is limited to the passing scene, testifies with an hundred tongues that the passing scene itself presents to us virtue as an object of action, and a moral law, graven deeply in our whole nature, as a guide. But now, when the screens that so bounded human vision have been removed, it were sad indeed, and not more sad than shameful, if that being should be content to live for the opinion of the moment, who has immortality for his inheritance. He that never dies, can he not afford to wait patiently a while? And can he not let Faith, which interprets the present, also guarantee the future? Nor are there any two habits of mind more distinct than that which chooses success for its aim and covets after popularity, and that, on

the other hand, which values and defers to the judgments of our fellow-men simply as helps in the attainment of truth.

47. But I would not confound with the sordid worship of popularity in after life, the graceful and instinctive love of praise in the uncritical period of youth. On the contrary, I say, avail yourselves of that stimulus to good deeds; and, when it proceeds from worthy sources, and lights upon worthy conduct, yield yourselves to the warm satisfaction it inspires. But yet, even while young, and even amidst the glow of that delight, keep a vigilant eye upon yourselves, refer the honour to Him from whom all honour comes, and ever be inwardly ashamed for not being worthier of His gifts.

48. And, gentlemen, if you let yourselves enjoy the praise of your teachers, let me beseech you to repay their care, and to help their arduous work, by entering into it with them, and by showing that you meet their exertions neither with a churlish mistrust, nor with a passive indifference, but with free and ready gratitude. Rely upon it, they require your sympathy; and they require it more in proportion as they are worthy of their work. The faithful and able teacher, says an old adage, is *in loco parentis*. His charge certainly resembles the mother's care in this, that, if he be devoted to his task, you can measure neither the cost to him of the efforts which he makes, nor the debt of gratitude you owe him. The great Poet of Italy—the profound and lofty Dante—had had for an instructor one* whom, for a miserable vice, his poem

* Brunetto Latini.

Se fosse pieno tutto 'l mio dimando,
Rispos' io lui, voi non sareste ancora
Dell' umana natura posto in bando;

places in the regions of the damned; and yet this lord of song—this prophet of all the knowledge of his time—this master of every gift that can adorn the human mind—when in those dreary regions he sees the known image of his tutor, avows in language of a magnificence all his own, that he cannot, even now, withhold his sympathy and sorrow from his unhappy teacher, for he recollects how, in the upper world, with a father's tender care, that teacher had pointed to him the way by which man becomes immortal.

49. Gentlemen, I have detained you long. Perhaps I have not had time to be brief; certainly I could have wished for much larger opportunities of maturing and verifying what I have addressed to you upon subjects which have always possessed a hold on my heart, and have long had public and palpable claims on my attention.* Such as I have, I give. And now, finally, in bidding you farewell, let me invoke every blessing upon your venerable University in its new career; upon the youth by whom its halls are gladdened, and upon the distinguished Head, and able teachers, by whom its places of authority are adorned.

Che in la mente m' è fitta, ed or m' accora
La cara e buona imagine paterna
Di voi nel mondo, quando ad ora ad ora
Mi 'nsegnavate come l' uom s' eterna.
Inferno, xv. 79.

* [As Representative for the University of Oxford, 1847–1865; *dum fata Deusque sinebant*.—W. E. G., 1879.]

II.

PLACE OF ANCIENT GREECE IN THE PROVIDENTIAL ORDER.

1865.

1. Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Professors, and Gentlemen,— The subject on which I desire to address to you my parting words, is, the place of ancient Greece in the providential order of the world.

Even the pointed announcement of such a subject may seem to partake of paradox. No one, indeed, would think of denying that the people, who inhabited that little cluster of rugged mountains and of narrow vales, played a part, and a great part, upon the stage of history, and left a mark, not deep only, but indelible, upon the character of the human race. No one would deny that they have delivered to us brilliant examples of energy in action, and matchless productions of the mind and hand, models in letters and in art. Nor is there any doubt about the fact, that Christian Europe has during many generations assigned to Greece the largest share in the cultivation of the human mind. But this age, which questions much, questions naturally enough the propriety of the judgment, which has thus awarded her the place of honour in the career of general education. Her language, her history, her literature, and her art, are regarded as the privileged delight and separate entertain-

ment of the few; but there is no clear perception in the majority of minds, that all these have entered deeply into the common interests of mankind.

2. Lastly, they are distinguished in so broad a manner from the teaching of the Gospel, nay, in certain points and instances they are so much in conflict with the spirit of the Evangelical code, that there is a disposition to regard them as belonging exclusively to the secular order, as well as to the secondary, and if I may so speak ornamental, interests of life. To its secondary interests, because Greece does not propose to teach us how to choose a profession, or to make way in the world:

"τί δέ μ' ὠφελήσουσ' οἱ ῥυθμοὶ πρὸς τἄλφιτα;"*

To the secular order, because it is beyond doubt that we cannot obtain from her the lessons of true religion. Nay, she has sometimes almost assumed the attitude of its rival; for both the period of the Revival of learning, and also more modern times, have supplied signal instances, in which her fascinations have well-nigh persuaded men of genius or of letters, Christian-born, to desert their allegiance to their faith, and endeavour to revive for themselves, at least in the region of the fancy, the worship once in use at her long-abandoned shrines.

3. Other reasons, besides these, have produced a practical indisposition to regard ancient Greece as having had a distinct, assignable, and most important place in the providential government of the world. Something that may be called religionism, rather than religion, has led us for the most part not indeed to deny in terms that God has been and is the God and Father and Governor of the

* Aristoph. Νεφ. 648.

whole human race, as well as of Jews and Christians, yet to think and act as if His providential eye and care had been confined in ancient times to the narrow valley of Jerusalem, and since the Advent to the Christian pale; or even to something which, enforcing some yet narrower limitation at our own arbitrary will, we think fit so to call. But surely He, who cared for the six-score thousand persons in ancient Nineveh, that could not distinguish between their right hand and their left, He without whom not a sparrow falls, He that shapes, in its minutest detail, even the inanimate world, and clothes the lily of the field with its beauty and its grace, He never forgot those sheep of His in the wilderness; but as, on the one hand, He solicited them, and bore witness to them of Himself, by never-ceasing bounty and by the law written in their hearts, so on the other hand in unseen modes He used them, as He is always using us, for either the willing, or if not the willing, then the unconscious or unwilling, furtherance and accomplishment of His designs.

4. The real paradox then would be not to assert, but to deny or even to overlook, the part which may have been assigned to any race, and especially to a race of such unrivalled gifts, in that great and all-embracing plan for the rearing and training of the human children of our Father in heaven, which we call the Providential Government of the world.

Such preparation, ascertained and established upon the solid ground of fact, may be termed prophecy in action; and is, if possible, yet stronger for the confirmation of belief, and yet more sublime in aspect as an illustration of Almighty greatness, than prophecy in word.

5. But in this Providential government there are diversities of operations. In this great house,* there are vessels of gold and silver, vessels of wood and earth. In the sphere of common experience, we see some human beings live and die, and furnish by their life no special lessons visible to man, but only that general teaching, in elementary and simple forms, which is derivable from every particle of human histories. Others there have been who, from the time when their young lives first, as it were, peeped over the horizon, seemed at once to

"Flame in the forehead of the morning sky;" †

whose lengthening years have been but one growing splendour, and at the last who

"leave a lofty name,
A light, a landmark, on the cliffs of fame." ‡

Now, it is not in the general, the ordinary, the elementary way, but it is in a high and special sense, that I claim for ancient Greece a marked, appropriated, distinctive place in the Providential order of the world. And I will set about explaining what I mean.

6. I presume that all philosophy, claiming to be Christian, regards the history of our race, from its earliest records down to the Incarnation and Advent of our Lord, as a preparation for that transcendent event, on which were to be hung thereafter the central destinies of man. Let us, however, examine more particularly that opinion which has prevailed in the world, sometimes sustained in argument, oftener by sufferance, sometimes

* 2 Tim. ii. 20. † 'Lycidas.' ‡ Moore.

lurking underground, and sometimes emboldened to assert itself in the face of day, that, although the Divine care extends in a general way to all men, yet we are to look for this preparation, at least for the positive parts of it, nowhere except in the pages of the Old Testament, and in the history and traditions of the Patriarchs and the Jews. This opinion has what some of our fathers would have termed "a face of piety": it has undoubtedly been held by pious persons, and urged in what are termed the interests of religion. But that face I am persuaded is a face only, a mask which ought to be stripped off, as it hides the reality from our view.

7. According to this theory, we are to consider the line of the Patriarchs and the descendants of Abraham, as exclusively the objects of any Divine dispensation which, operating in the times before the Advent, is to be reckoned as part of the preparation for the great event. To them we are to look as the guardians of all human excellence in all its infinite varieties; and when we seem to find it elsewhere, we are either to treat the phenomenon as spurious, or else, believing without sight, we are to consider it as derived, through some hidden channel, from the stores communicated by Divine revelation to the favoured race.

8. This theory found perhaps its fullest, nay even its most properly fanatical, development in the 'Paradise Regained' of Milton. There the works of the Greek intellect and imagination are depreciated in a strain of the utmost extravagance; and, what is worse, the extravagance is made to proceed from those Divine lips, all whose words were weighed and measured in the exactest balances and lines of truth. First, the proposition is advanced by the great poet, that divine inspiration

precludes the need of any other knowledge, even "though granted true:" "but these"—so proceeds the speech—

> "But these are false, or little else but dreams,
> Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm."

The Greek philosophers are dismissed, as a body, with wholesale condemnation: while Homer and the tragedians are stated, with a gravity in itself wonderful enough, to have learned the art of poetry from the Jews:

> "All our law and story strewed
> With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscribed,
> Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
> That pleased so well our victors' ear, declare
> That rather Greece from us these arts derived."

The orators are set to compete with the Hebrew prophets:

> "Herein to our prophets far beneath
> As men divinely taught, and better teaching,
> The solid rules of civil government."*

A competition this, which would probably have caused the greatest astonishment among those, to whom the prize in it is awarded.

9. It is difficult to understand how Milton's noble genius could have prompted or permitted him thus to pit against one another things really, in the main, incommensurable; or how his learning, which must have made him acquainted with the Greek philosophy, could have failed to impress him with the belief that men like Aristotle and Plato were earnest, manful, seekers after truth.

Warburton observes upon these passages, that they

* 'Paradise Regained,' Book iv. 291, 334, 356.

were in accordance with the fashion of the time. And it appears that, especially in the later years of Milton's life, there were a number of learned men, English and foreign, such as Bochart, Huet, Voss, Gale, and Bogan, who busied themselves in showing correspondences between the Hebrew and the Pagan traditions, and who in some instances, particularly that of Huet, Bishop of Avranches, pushed their undertaking into undue and fanciful detail. But I have not found that they propounded any doctrine in reference to the derivation of heathen literature from Jewish sources, either to the sweeping extent, or in the cynical spirit, of the 'Paradise Regained.' Their object appears to have been a different one, namely, to fortify the historical credit of the sacred records by tracing elsewhere matter essentially corresponding with their contents; either as clothed in contemporary disguises, or as flowing from a common fountain-head.

10. In truth, the seed-plot of this peculiar learning belongs to a much earlier and a more interesting and important literature. Paganism, which had been for the two greatest races of the ancient world in their infancy a creed, and in their riper age a profession, did not, when assailed by the victorious advance of Christianity, retire from the intellectual battle-field without a desperate struggle, carried on in its behalf with all the resources of powerful and subtle intellects. As a revelation of the designs of God for the recovery and moral renovation of mankind, the Gospel in its early days was not unfairly required to give an account, not only of itself, but of everything else in the world that preceded or opposed it. The Pagan system, if it had nothing else, had at least one important advantage in the controversy. It represented a continuous unbroken tradition, dating from beyond the

memory of man: it had come down from father to son, through some scores of generations, with an ostensible sameness and a very widely extended sway; and none could name the day when, in the two far-famed peninsulas that had given the breath of life to the ancient world, it did not exist and prevail.

11. Under these circumstances, it was most difficult for the Christian apologists to admit that there lay in the old religions of the world, and particularly in the Greek or the Latin mythology, any nucleus or germ of the primeval truth. For the logical consequence of such an admission might have seemed to be that they should not sweep the old religion off the face of the earth, but should endeavour to reduce it to some imagined standard of its purer infancy: that they should not destroy it, but reform it: whereas, on the contrary, the purpose of the Christian teaching was, and could not but be, not to reform but to destroy. They met, then, the traditional claims of Paganism by taking their stand upon the purer, clearer, and still older tradition of the Hebrews. They parried the negative value in argument of an undefined antiquity with the positive record of the creation of the world, and with the sublime exordium of the human race, propagated in a definite line from man to man, down to the firm ground of historic times. So far so good. But still they were obstinately confronted by a system conterminous, both in space and in duration, with all that was known of the civilised world; and able, too, to say of itself, with some apparent truth, that, when civilisation and culture themselves began, they did not make or bring it, but found it on the ground before them.

12. Thus upon the merely historic field the battle might have looked, to the ordinary spectator, like a drawn

one; while it seemed needful for the dignity and high origin of the new religion to conquer not at one point, but at all. Hence perhaps the tendency of the Christian apologists, in unconscious obedience to the exigencies of controversy, after they had proved by reasoning the truth and authority of the Gospel, and had smitten their enemy, as they did smite him, to the dust, by their moral arguments against Paganism, to accelerate its end, and to demolish the very last of its seeming titles, its antiquity of origin, by refusing to affiliate any part or parcel of it, at any point of time, to the stock of a primeval religion, and by contending that so much of truth as was scattered through the rolls of its literature had been filtered in detail through successive media, from Greece to Rome, from Egypt to Greece, but was ultimately to be traced in every case to the ancient people of God, and to the records and traditions which had had an historical existence among them.

13. I turn now to the remarkable work of Eusebius, commonly called the 'Præparatio Evangelica.' In that work he sets forth the moral impurity, imbecility, impiety, and falseness of the Pagan system. He contrasts with it the marvellous prerogatives of the older Scriptures. In what lies beyond this province, he is not so injudicious as to depreciate the intellectual development of the Hellenic race, alike original and vast. But, he says they learned, in its elementary form, the "superstitious error" of their religion, which by their own genius they afterwards recast and adorned,* from Egyptian, Phœnician, and other foreign sources: and their glimpses of the Godhead, and whatever they had of instruction

* Note I.

for the soul's health, they obtained, by importation mediate or immediate, from the Hebrews only, except in so far as it was supplied them by the light of nature.*

14. The question here arises, if the Hellenic race got their religion from Phœnicia and Egypt, from whence did Egypt and Phœnicia obtain it? And here it is that we come upon the chief error into which Eusebius appears to have been led by the controversial necessities of his position. He treats the religions of the world as having been purely and wholly, even in their first beginnings, errors, and inventions of the human mind; without any trace or manner of relationship to that Divine truth which, as he truly tells us, had been imparted to the Hebrews long before the days of Moses and the composition of the Pentateuch. According to him, the old religions were made up of worships offered to the heavenly bodies, to the powers of nature, to the spirits of departed men, to useful or important arts and inventions, and to the demonic race in its two families of the good and the evil. He admits, in every part of his work, that he appears in the arena to maintain and justify the Christians as the authors of a schism in the religious world; and this admission it is, which, by the nature of his propositions and his argument, he converts into a boast.

15. The view taken by Eusebius was, I apprehend, that generally taken by the Christian apologists. Saint Clement of Alexandria † not only denies the originality of the Greeks in what they possessed of truth, but treats as a theft their appropriation of Hebrew ideas: ‡ and fanci-

* Note II. † Strom. B. vi. p. 618, ed. Col. 1688.
‡ Note III.

fully, I might say whimsically, supports the charge by instances of plagiarism perpetrated by one Greek author on another. Justin Martyr * allows no higher parentage to the Greek mythology than the poets, who were bad enough, or, still worse as he says, the philosophers. Lactantius † ascribes to fallen angels, or dæmons, the invention of image-worship. Theophilus ‡ affirms that the gods of the heathen were dead men: Lactantius, § that they were *reges maximi et potentissimi.*

16. But time does not permit, and the argument does not require me to pursue this part of the subject into greater detail. ‖ Enough to say that the early Christian writers, not being the narrow-minded men that many take them for, did not deny or disparage the intellectual prodigies of the great heathen races, of those marvellous philosophers as Eusebius often calls them, of that Plato so eminently commended by his intellectual debtor the great Saint Augustine: ¶ nor did they make light of the voice of Nature in the soul of man; nor of the Divine Government over the whole world at every period of its existence; nor of the truths to be found in ancient writers. But the defiled and putrescent system of religion which they found confronting them, formidable as it was from antiquity, wide extension, general consent, from the strength of habit, and from the tenacious grasp of powerful interests upon temporal possessions and advantages, this evil system they hunted down in argument without mercy, and did not admit to be an historical and traditional derivation from a primeval truth, which

* Cohortatio ad Græcos, 43, 51, 52. † Div. Inst. ii. 16.
‡ Ad. Autol. i. p. 75, A. § Div. Inst. i. 8.
‖ Note IV. ¶ De Civ. Dei, viii. 4, and Contra Acad. iii. 37.

the common ancestry of the Semitic and the European races had once in common enjoyed.

17. It can hardly be said that there was intentional unfairness in this proceeding. The Christian writers laboured under the same defect of critical knowledge and practice with their adversaries. They took the lives, deeds, and genealogies of the heathen deities, just as they found them in the popular creed, for the starting-points of their argument. Their immediate business was to confute a false religion, and to sweep from the face of the world a crying and incurable moral evil: not to construct an universal philosophy of the religious history of man; for which the time had not then, and perhaps has not yet, arrived. But we have new sources of knowledge, new means of detecting error and guiding inquiry, new points of view set open to us: and the more freely and faithfully we use them the more we shall find cause to own, with reverence and thankfulness, the depth, and height, and breadth of the wisdom and goodness of God.

18. Meantime, it is easy to perceive the polemical advantage which the advocate of Christianity obtained by this unsparing manner of attack. He brought the case straight to issue, not between differently shaded images of a Deity confessedly the same, with their respective champions ready to uphold their several claims amidst the din of contending preferences and of interminable dispute, but, taking his stand on the threshold of the argument, and like a soldier in fight disincumbering himself of all detail, between the God of the Hebrews on the one side, worshipped from the beginning of mankind, and pretended gods on the other, which could render no distinct account of their origin, and were in truth no gods at all. And, to estimate the greatness of this advantage, we must take into view the nature of the adverse arguments.

19. The Pagan champions did not too much embarrass themselves by defending the popular forms and fables of the old religion. Perhaps, to the credulous villager, the religion of Porphyry might have been as unintelligible or as odious as that of St. Paul. All these incumbrances were at once disposed of on the Pagan side by being treated as allegorical, figurative, secondary manifestations of the true Deity, or even as having been in many cases due to the intrusive and mischievous activity of the spirits of evil. The Pagan champion, then, was himself contending, not for the forms, but for the one great unseen Deity, which, driven to his shifts, he affirmed to lie hid within the forms. For the Christian to admit, under circumstances like these, that any principle of inward life, under whatever incrustations, still was latent in the mythology as it lay before their eyes, might have been to endanger the truth. And any seeming approach to that admission, such as allowing that that foul and loathsome corpse had once been alive in youthful health and beauty, might have sorely hindered and perplexed the Christian argument on its way to the general mind.

20. As respects the religious ideas of the Greeks, properly so called, and their philosophic tenets, the scholars of the Seventeenth century seem to have occupied much the same ground with Eusebius and the early Christian writers. But as respected their mythological personages, not having the Pagans to argue with, they had no prejudices against finding for them a lineage in Scripture. I am not competent to determine how far, in the prosecution of their task, they went into excess. But those who admit the truth of the Sacred Records, must surely decline to say that they were wrong in principle. We are not called upon to believe that Neptune was

Japhet, or that Iphigenia was Jephtha's daughter; or that Deucalion was Noah, or that Bellerophon was really Joseph in the house of Potiphar, notwithstanding certain resemblances of circumstances by which these and some other such cases are marked. But if we believe in the substantial soundness of the text of Scripture and in the substantial truth of its history, we must then also believe that the Hamitic and Japhetic races, as they in their successive branches set out upon their long migrations, brought with them, from the early home which they had shared with the sons of Shem, the common religious traditions. They could not but go, as Æneas is fabled to have gone from Troy,

"Cum sociis natoque, Penatibus, ac magnis Dîs." *

21. But if there be those, who would strangely forbid us to appeal to what may be called, by the most modest of its august titles, the oldest and most venerable document of human history, the argument still remains much the same. The progress of ethnological and philological research still supplies us with accumulating evidence of the chain of migrations, north and westwards, of the Turanian, and especially of the Aryan races, from points necessarily undefined but in close proximity with the seats of the patriarchal nomads; and has not supplied us with any evidence, or with any presumption whatever, that their known traditions sprang from any fountain-head other than that which is described in the Book of Genesis as the three-branching family of Noah.

22. If, then, upon this ground, there is, to say the least, nothing to exclude or to disparage, but so much to

* Æn. iii. 12.

support, the doctrine of the original intercommunion of these races with the Semitic tribes, which could not but include religion, the question recurs in all its force, how was it even possible that they could leave behind them their religious traditions upon the occasion of their first local separation from their parent stock? They did not surely, like the souls in transmigration,* drink of the river of forgetfulness, and raze out from the tablets of the brain, as a preparation for their journey, all they had ever known, or heard, or felt. The obscuration and degeneracy of religious systems is commonly indeed a rapid, but is necessarily a gradual process. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus;* and no tribe or nation passes either from light to darkness, or from the possession of a given religious belief to the loss of it, at a moment's notice.

23. It was therefore antecedently probable that, in examining the actual religious systems of later times, and of countries at a distance from the earliest known seat of mankind, but connected with it by the great current of human migration, we should find remaining tokens of affinity to any religious system, which upon competent evidence we might believe to have prevailed among the races most closely and directly connected with that seat. And this antecedent probability is sustained by a mass of evidence running through the whole web of the Hellenic mythology, obscure indeed in its later and more darkened ages, but continually gaining in force and clearness as we ascend the stream of time, and so strong in itself as to be, I am firmly persuaded, incapable of argumentative confutation.

To collect and present this mass of evidence, with a

* Plat. de Rep. B. x. p. 621.

careful and strict appreciation of the respective value of its parts, is a work not to be attempted within the limits, however extended by your indulgence, of what is termed an Address. But I will now endeavour to bring to a head what has been stated, and to apply it to the purpose which I announced at the commencement.

24. I submit then to you, that the true *Præparatio Evangelica*, or the rearing and training of mankind for the Gospel, was not confined to that eminent and conspicuous part of the process, which is represented by the dispensations given to the Patriarchs and the Jews. It extends likewise to other fields of human history and experience; among which, in modes, and in degrees, varyingly perceptible to us, the Almighty distributed the operations preliminary and introductory to His one great, surpassing, and central design for the recovery and happiness of mankind. So that, in their several spheres, some positive, some negative, some spiritual, some secular, with a partial consciousness, or with an absolute unconsciousness, all were co-operators in working out His will; under a guidance strong, and subtle, and the more sublime, perhaps, in proportion as it was the less sensible.

25. In the body of those traditions of primitive religion, which are handed down to us in the Book of Genesis, and which I shall make no further apology for treating as records of great historic weight, there was manifestly included a strongly marked human element. It was embodied in the few but pregnant words which declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.* The principle of evil was to receive a deadly shock in its vital part, and this at the hands of

* Gen. iii. 15.

One, who should be born into the very race that He would come to deliver.

26. The next observation I would submit is this: that there was no provision made, so far as we are aware, at any rate in the Mosaic system, for keeping alive this particular element of the original traditions, otherwise than as an anticipation reaching into the far distant future. On the contrary, every precaution was apparently taken to prevent any human being, or any human form, from becoming the object of a religious reverence. To this aim the abstraction of the body of Moses* from the view of the people seems to be most naturally referred: and the stringent prohibitions of the Second Commandment of the Decalogue appear to have been especially pointed against the execution by human hands of the figure of a man. For we hear in Holy Writ of the serpent† made by Moses and exhibited to the nation: and the brazen sea of the Temple‡ rested upon twelve brazen oxen. There were cherubim in the Ark framed by Moses;§ and "cherubim of image-work" were made by Solomon for the Temple:‖ but they were not, it is commonly believed, in human figure: and the four living creatures of the vision of Ezekiel had each the mixed character of man, lion, ox, and eagle.¶

27. And it would appear, that these measures were effectual for a particular purpose. Ready as were the Jews to worship the serpent or the golden calf, their idolatry never was anthropomorphic. The majesty of the Deity was thus kept, in the belief of the Hebrew race,

* Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6.
† Num. xxi. 8, 9; John iii. 14.
‡ 2 Chron. iv. 2–5.
§ Exod. xxv. 17.
‖ 2 Chron. iii. 10.
¶ Ezek. i. 5–10.

effectually apart from that one form of lowering association, which, as we see from the experience of Paganism, was by far the subtlest, the most attractive, and the most enchaining. A pure Theistic system was maintained: a redemption to come was embraced in faith: and, in a religion laden with ritual, and charged with symbol, no rite, no symbol, was permitted to exhibit to the senses, and through the senses to the mind, of the people, the form of Him that was to be the worker of the great deliverance. Thus was kept vacant until the appointed time, in the general belief as well as in the scheme or theory of religion, the sublime and solitary place which the Redeemer of the world was to fill. Counterfeits there were; but they had not that dangerous resemblance to the truth, which would enable them to make head against the Messiah when He should arrive. And so, after He had come, His only rivals and competitors in Judæa were conceptions, distorted in the abstract, of His character and office; far different from those solid formations of an embodied and organised religion, whose formidable contact the Gospel had not to encounter, until the life and work of its Author, and the foundation of the Christian society with all its essential powers, were complete.

28. Let us now turn to the religion of the Hellenic race; and we shall find that, as matter of fact, it appropriated to itself, and was intensely permeated by, that very anthropomorphic * element which the Mosaic system was so specially framed to exclude, and to which the other religions of antiquity gave, in comparison, but a doubtful and secondary place.

* Note V.

29. If I am asked to point out a link which especially associates the early Greek mythology with the humanistic element of primitive tradition, I venture to name the character of Apollo as pre-eminently supplying such a link. He is born of Zeus, but he is not born of Herè. Through him, as the God of prophecy and of oracle, the divine counsels are revealed to the world. This lamp of knowledge, burning in him, establishes an affinity between him and the sun; but the anthropomorphic genius of the religion is jealous of the absorption of Deity into mere nature-power. At what period the identification of Apollo with the Sun took place in the Hellenic system, we cannot say; but this we know, that it had not taken place in the time of Homer, with whom Apollo and the Sun are perfectly distinct individuals. To him is assigned the healing art, and the general office of deliverance. To him again, who remains to the last the perfect model of heavenly beauty in the human male form, is assigned by tradition the conquest alike over Death and over the might of the rebellious spirits. In his hands we find numerous functions of such rank and such range, that we cannot understand how they could pass to him from Zeus the supreme deity, until we remember that they are the very functions assigned by a more real and higher system to the Son of God; the true Instructor, Healer, Deliverer, Judge, and Conqueror of Death, in whom the power and majesty of the Godhead were set forth to the world.*

30. The character of this deity, whom Eusebius calls "the most venerable and the wisest" † of the whole Olympian order, affords, in my opinion, the most complete and varied proof of the traditional relationship to which I

* Note VI. † Præp. Evang. iv. 17.

now refer. Abundant evidence, however, of the same character, might be adduced under many other heads. But I do not refer to this weighty subject at present with a view of leading you to affirm the existence of such a relationship. That could not legitimately be done, except upon a scrutiny, both deliberate and minute, of a great mass of evidence, gathered from many quarters, and dependent for much of its force upon careful juxtaposition and comparison. I now advert to the question only as casting light upon matter which will follow. What I take, however, to be indisputable, apart from all theorising upon causes, is this fact—that the Hellenic mythology is charged throughout with the human, or anthropomorphic element, in a manner clearly and broadly separating it from the other religions of the ancient world. It has anthropomorphism for the soul and centre of all that is distinctive in it; and that peculiar quality seems to enter, more or less, into the religion of other tribes nearly in proportion as they were related to the Hellenic race.

31. Let us now shortly contemplate that mythology, such as it appears in the works of Homer, its prime and most conspicuous author, and himself the true representative of the purely Hellenic spirit in its freest and most authentic form.

The theology of Homer is variously composed. He seems to have lived at the critical moment in the history of the Hellenic, or, as they were then called, Achaian families or tribes, when the different ethnical elements or factors with which they were to assimilate—Pelasgic, Ionian, Egyptian, Phœnician, and the like—settled down and compounded themselves into the firmly-knit and sharply-defined character of a people. They were no

longer to be a chaotic assemblage of unassorted or even conflicting units, but as a people were born into that world, on whose fortunes they were to exercise an influence almost immeasurable.

32. The theology of Homer may be called the Olympian system. That system exhibits a kind of royal or palace-life of man,* but on the one hand more splendid and powerful, on the other more intense and free. It is a wonderful and gorgeous creation. It is eminently in accordance with the signification of that English epithet —rather a favourite apparently with our old writers—the epithet *jovial*,† which is derived from the Latin name of its head. It is a life charged with all the pleasures of mind and body; a life of banquet and of revel, of music and of song; a life in which solemn grandeur alternates with jest and gibe; a life of childish wilfulness and fretfulness, combined with serious, manly, and imperial cares; for the Olympian sphere of Homer has at least this one recommendation to esteem,—that it is not peopled with the merely lazy and selfish gods of Epicurus, but its inhabitants busily deliberate on the government of man, and in their debates the cause of justice wins. I do not now, however, discuss the moral titles of the Olympian scheme; what I dwell upon is, its intense humanity, alike in its greatness and its littleness, its glory and its shame.

33. As the cares and joys of human life, so the structure of society below is reflected, by the wayward wit of man, on heaven above. Though the names and fundamental traditions of the several deities were wholly or

* Grote's 'History of Greece,' vol. i. pp. 4 seqq. and 462 seqq.
† Note VII.

in great part imported from abroad, their characters, relations, and attributes passed under a Hellenising process, which gradually marked off for them special provinces and functions, according to laws which appear to have been mainly original and indigenous, and to have been taken by analogy from the division of labour in human life and in political society. As early as in Homer, while the prerogatives of Apollo and Athenè are almost universal, yet the Olympian community has its complement of officers and servants with their proper functions. Hephaistos moulds the twenty golden thrones, which move automatically to form the circle of the council of the gods; and builds for each of his brother deities their separate palaces in the deep-folded recesses of the mighty mountain. Music and song are supplied by Apollo and the Muses: Ganymede and Hebè are the cup-bearers: Hermes is the agent, Iris is the messenger: while Themis, in whom is impersonated the idea of deliberation and of relative rights, is the summoner of the ἐκκλησία * or Great Assembly of the Twentieth Iliad, when the great issue of the war is to be determined.

34. Nothing nearer this on earth has perhaps been bodied forth by the imagination of later poets than the scene, in which Schiller has described the coronation of Rodolph of Hapsburg, with the Electors of the Empire discharging their several offices around him: I quote from the only translation within my reach:—

> "The ancient hall of Aix was bright:
> The coronation-board beside
> Sate King Rodolph's anointed might,
> In Kaiser's pomp and pride:

* Note VIII.

His meat was served by the Palatine,
Bohemia poured the sparkling wine;
The seven Electors every one
Stood, fast about the wide-world's King,
Each his high function following,
Like the planets round the sun."

35. But a still deeper trace of humanitarianism lay in the transportation of the family order into heaven. Only the faintest rudiment of such a system could have been drawn from Semitic sources; but it was carried by the Hellenes to its farthest consequences, and used for the basis of their supernatural structure. The old Pelasgian deities of the country, the importations from Thrace, Phœnicia, Egypt, or elsewhere, and the traditions proper to the Hellenic tribes themselves, were all marshalled and adjusted in a scheme formed according to the domestic relations familiar to us on earth. The Nature-powers of the older worship received the honorary distinction of being made parents and grand or great-grand sires to the ruling dynasty; but, while thus tricked out with barren dignity, they were deprived of all active functions, and relegated into practical insignificance.

36. Still, the very arrangements, which are anomalous in the abstract, testify to the strength of that anthropomorphic principle, to which they owed their recognition. For the elder deities were not the more powerful; and parents were supplanted by their sons. Okeanos the sire of the whole family, and Tethūs their mother, have for practical purposes no power or place in the Olympian system. They exercise no influence whatever on the life or destinies of man. As the mere representatives of certain physical forces, they had already been ejected from their old supremacy by the more aspiring and truer ten-

dencies of the first Hellenic creed. But that same creed, still copying earth in heaven, found for them a place, as the decrepit and superannuated members of the system, who had passed from the exercise of sovereignty into retirement, like Laertes* on his rural farm in Ithaca. More or less of the same domestic structure is ascribed without doubt to the theogonies of some other countries; but our accounts of them may have been influenced by Greek sympathies; and, besides, I am not aware that in any of them the domestic theory was worked out with the same genial feeling, and the same nearly universal consistency.

37. In one respect indeed, at the least, there was a conflict of contending sentiments. The early Hellenes seem to have had a peculiar horror of incestuous connection. But the notion of unity of descent among the gods excluded the possibility of arranging them in the family order except by nuptial relationships which, upon earth and for themselves, Greeks would have abhorred. The strong repugnance, so far as it was carried into the supernal world, gave way under the bidding of a necessity yet stronger. Their profound sense of the natural order was less disturbed by having Zeus a polygamist, with his sister for his principal wife, than it would have been by abandoning that scheme of propagation from parent to child upon which the whole Olympian hierarchy was arranged. The acknowledgment of what was forbidden on earth as established in heaven represents, in all likelihood, the concessions which were necessary in order to prevent a breach in the framework of the popular creed, and to weld into one system elements that belonged to many.

* Odyss. xxiv. 205 seqq.

38. The materials for the old religions, outside of Greece and the Greek races, were in great part afforded first by the worship of nature, and secondly by the worship of animals. Both of these the early Hellenic system steadily rejected and eschewed; and their religion took its stand upon the idea, which inseparably incorporated deity in the matchless human form. This, and much besides, that is obscured in the later and more mixed traditions, stands out clearly in the earliest records of the Greeks. The 'Theogony' of Hesiod, which must be regarded as a work of very great antiquity, exhibits to us the elemental and the Olympian gods in groups clearly enough distinguished. The poems of Homer, far more Hellenic in their spirit, may be said to exclude and repel from the sacred precinct alike the heavenly bodies and the elemental powers.

39. For example. The Plague in the first Iliad bears evident marks of solar agency: but, without the least allusion to that luminary, it is ascribed to Apollo in one of the noblest anthropomorphic passages of the poems. The Sun * only once appears as a person in the Iliad, when he reluctantly obeys the command of Herè that by setting he shall end the day, which was the last day of Trojan success; thus indicating the side to which, as an elemental deity, he inclined. Again, Xanthos, a river god, appears in the Theomachy: but he appears on the side of Troy; and he seems probably to have had one name as a deity with the Trojans,† another with the Greeks or Achaians as a stream. When Agamemnon offers solemn sacrifice for his army only, he invokes Zeus alone, and invokes him as dwelling in the sky.‡ But

* Note IX. † Note X. ‡ Il. ii. 412.

when he offers the joint sacrifice of the two parties in the Third Book, then he invokes Zeus as governing from the hill of Ida, which was in his view, and invokes with him the Sun, the Earth, and the Rivers.* The Rivers are summoned to the Olympian assembly of the Twentieth Book; but it is an assembly in which the gods are to take their several sides.

40. Again. It is a mistake to suppose that Poseidon was an elemental god. He was the patron of the sea, as he was of the horse; but he was more the god of navigation, than of water. The sea had its proper elemental god, the hoary Nereus, with Amphitrite possibly for his wife; but Amphitrite is always the moaning Amphitrite, and Nereus never emerges from the depths; nor, though he is frequently referred to, is he ever named on the Hellenic page of Homer.† I turn to another head.

41. Loath on the one side to admit the imposing elements of Nature-worship on the grand scale, the Olympian system is yet more alien to the other favourite form of religious illusion, the worship offered to animals, and particularly to the ox; of which Egypt seems to have been the head-quarters. In the full exhibition, which the poems of Homer afford us, of the religion in its earlier forms, there is not a trace of animal worship. In the Odyssey, indeed, an awful and mystic sacredness attaches to the Oxen of the Sun. In the island of Thrinakiè, detained by adverse winds, the companions of Odysseus are warned that under no extremity should they supply their wants by the destruction of these animals. Accordingly they resort to birds and fish, unusual food with the Homeric Greeks; they finally put some of the

* Il. iii. † Note XI.

animals to death, only to avoid dying themselves by famine; and for this offence the entire crew, except Odysseus, who had not shared in it, are drowned when next they take to sea. Now, although there is no animal worship here, there is what may be called animal sanctity. But it is in connection with a deity not even recognised at the time in the Hellenic system; and, introduced as it is during the voyage in remote parts, which must have been based upon the tales of Phœnician mariners, it appears certainly to belong to the Phœnician circle of mythology.

42. And here we find an example of the manner, in which the immense plastic power of the Hellenic mind dealt with foreign ideas of all kinds, so as to make them its own. What their sculptors did with the rude and formless art of Egypt, what their philosophers did with the shreds of Eastern knowledge picked up on their travels, their theology did with the many and crude varieties of superstition, which flowed in upon them from the numerous quarters that furnished, by sea and land, immigrants for the Hellenic peninsula. The old Pelasgian gods, not rudely overthrown, but gently taken from their pedestals, were set down unharmed and harmless in the shade of a mellow distance; and the animals, before which lower types of men were content to bow down the godlike head, were not, when the traditions that deified them set foot on Grecian soil, thrust wholly out of view; but they were put into appropriate, and always secondary, places. The eagle of Zeus, the falcon of Apollo, the peacock of Herè, the owl of Pallas, stood no higher in Greece than as accessories to the figures on which they attend.

43. In the scheme of Homer, not all even of these are

found. And while in Homer we should look in vain for anything beyond the faintest and most ambiguous trace of a connection between Apollo and the wolf, we find that connection full-blown in the Egyptian mythology, as it is reported by Diodorus; where Horos, his counterpart in the system of that country, is rescued from death by Osiris in the form of that animal. On the other hand, the later Greek tradition, more deeply charged with foreign elements, abounds with traditions of the wolf,* which in Athens was the protective emblem of the courts of justice. But, even thus far down the stream, the rule seems to hold, that when the figures of the brute creation are allowed to appear in the Hellenic system, they seem to be reduced to subordinate and secondary uses.

44. Saint Clement, indeed, charges † upon the Greeks certain instances both of nature-worship and of the worship of animals; but in a manner, and with particulars, which show how slight and local were the instances of either. It will not be expected that, in an Address of this nature, I should attempt those minuter shadings, which general statements like the foregoing must require in order to perfect accuracy. Besides, a common substratum of ideas runs through the mass of the old religions of the world: but we trace the genius of each nation, and it may be the Providential purpose for which that genius was imparted, in its distinctive mode of handling the common stock, here enlarging, there con-

* Müller's 'Dorians,' i. 273, 325. (Tuffnell and Lewis's translation.)

† S. Clem. Admonitio ad Gentes, p. 16, B. [I do not exclude the possibility that superstitions like the *Serpens Epidaurius* may have been practised among the Greeks of Homer's time. But these, if they existed, were as local currents running under ground, and were not permitted a place in the national creed.—W. E. G., 1879.]

tracting, here elevating, there depressing, so as to produce a distinctive and characteristic result.

45. And now I will endeavour to point out, in rude and rapid outline, some of the remarkable results of this *idée mère* of the Greek religion, the annexation of manhood to deity, and the reciprocal incorporation of deity into manhood; which made the human form the link between the visible and the invisible worlds, the meeting-point of earth and heaven. And here my object will be only to give you a sample of the redundant materials, which seem to rise up around me thickly piled on every side; most of all, perhaps, in the Homeric or Achaian period.

46. First I will remark a profound reverence for human life and human nature, which even the fiercest passions of war would but rarely, and only for a moment, violate. Hence perhaps it is, that we find the highest refinements of feeling which belong to the gentleman, existing at a time, when, among the Greeks, the material appliances of civilisation were in their infancy, and when writing and the alphabet were practically unknown. The sentiment of honour is indicated, at this epoch, by a word (αἴδως) at once too comprehensive and too delicate for our rendering by a single term in the English, perhaps in any modern tongue. A catalogue of horrors, that have stained the life of man elsewhere, sometimes even in the midst of the triumphs of culture and refinement, were unknown to the Achaian period. I will dwell for a moment on one of these, the practice of human sacrifice.

47. You will find* from a charming volume, the Miscellanies of Lord Stanhope, that a few years ago,

* Stanhope's 'Miscellanies,' p. 112.

some of the most famous men of our day were brought by him into correspondence on the interesting, but to many startling, question whether human sacrifices were in use among the Romans: not the unlettered semi-barbarians of Romulus or Tarquin, but the Romans of Rome in its highest political power, and its palmiest civilisation. Naturally enough, a considerable repugnance was manifested to entertaining this supposition. But, as the inquiry proceeded, a younger yet profoundly learned scholar, Sir John Acton, was brought into the field. His full and varied researches do not appear in the pages of Lord Stanhope. But they range well-nigh over all space and time. His conclusions are that "we find traces of it, that is of human sacrifice, throughout almost the whole Hellenic world, in the *cultus* of almost every god, and in all periods of their independent history." * He adds that among the Romans it was still more rife: and that though attempts were made to restrain or put down the practice, even the famous edict of Adrian, to which Eusebius allows the honour of its extinction, failed to effect it: nay, more, that "in every generation of the four centuries, from the fall of the Republic to the establishment of Christianity, human victims were sacrificed by the Emperors" themselves.

48. The conclusions of Sir John Acton are not admitted in their full breadth by other great authorities; † but it seems impossible to doubt the widespread and long-continued, or often-recurring prevalence of the practice, in contact, more or less, with civilised times and nations, and sustained, in various degrees, by perverse yet accepted ideas of religion.

* Acton, p. 19. † Milman's 'Hist. of Christ.,' i. p. 27, 1st edition.

49. Notwithstanding this terrible and too well sustained indictment against the unenlightened and the enlightened world, it is pleasing to observe that this horrible rite did not originally belong to the usages of Greece. It seems to have come in by a late contagion from abroad: and human sacrifice is not found in Homer. The slaughter of some Trojan youths by Achilles, in his unsated vengeance, has none of the marks of a religious rite, and no relation to deity either original or derived. Of the tradition of Iphigenia, sacrificed in Aulis for the welfare of the Achaian host, Homer is wholly ignorant: and Agamemnon in the Iliad speaks of his daughters as open to the option of Achilles, in the same way as many fathers may since have done who had two or three of them ready to marry, but so as to supply negative but almost sufficient evidence that no such blood-stained gap had been made in the circle of his family. It is many centuries later, when the tradition reaches us in the works of the tragedians. In that grandest of all Greek dramas, the 'Agamemnon' of Æschylus, his murderous wife Clytemnestra seeks an apology for her act partly in the immolation of Iphigenia by her father's hand: and the tone of the play is so condemnatory as to suggest that an Athenian audience, of the middle of the fifth century before Christ, did not allow religion to be an adequate apology for the deed.

50. At a somewhat later period, the 'Iphigenia in Tauris' of Euripides furnish us with more direct evidence that the practice, while not indigenous in Greece, was foully rife among other races. The scene is laid abroad in barbaric territory: and the chorus of Greek attendants on the doomed Princess, addressing the Deity, says, "Receive, O venerable one, this sacrifice, if it be a sacrifice agreeable to thee, which the law of us Greeks

declares to be unholy." Thus showing that the tradition of the foreign origin of the abominable rite, and the original freedom of the Hellenic system from it, was cherished in the memory of the people.

51. I have already had to observe, that the Achaians eschewed both incest and polygamy. I may add that even the unconscious incest of Œdipus and Jocasta drew down the heaviest calamities: and further that we have no trace, among the Homeric records, not only of cannibalism but of violence to nature in any form, as existing among the Greeks. The crimes of abortion and the exposure of infants, authorised and commended by Plato in his ideal State,* have no place in the Homeric poems: nor do they afford the slightest indication of those shameless lusts, which formed the incredible and indelible disgrace † of Greece in the time of its consummate supremacy in Art, and at the climax of its boasted civilisation.

52. If I am right in my estimate of the place which humanity, in soul and body, held in its relation to the Hellenic religion, we may naturally expect to find it attested, among other ways, by the following signs:—an intense admiration of personal beauty: ‡ a resentment against and avoidance of deformity, as a kind of sin against the law of nature: and a marked disposition to associate ignorance with vice.

53. I cannot now undertake to exhibit the remarkable manner in which these anticipations are realised in Homer: whose appreciation of the beauty of the human form appears, from unequivocal signs, to exceed that of

* Plat. de Republ., B. v. § 8 seqq. p. 459.
† Note XII. ‡ Note XIII.

any author in any age or country: while upon the other side, introducing but one vicious character, Thersites, among the Greeks of the Iliad, he describes his personal appearance with a degree of detail foreign to his habit, in order, seemingly, that, even as we read, we may see him before us in his hideous bodily deformity.

54. The same topics might be illustrated in detail from the later history of Greece, in modes inconsistent or questionable enough, yet abundantly significant. Courtesans of extraordinary beauty were sometimes chosen to march in the procession of the gods. By the side of the evil tradition of Aphroditè the promiscuous, there lingered long the rival tradition of an Aphroditè the heavenly. On the other hand, with respect to deformity, I do not remember that Aristophanes,* in his campaign against Socrates, makes the use which we might have expected of the ugliness of the philosopher. And though jests were freely passed upon actual eccentricity of feature, I have not seen it proved, in such partial examination of the subject as has lain within my power, that the Greeks were wont to make use of that which in the strictest sense we call caricature; which I understand to be, the founding upon some known or peculiar feature a representation of deformity that does not exist, for the purpose of exciting ridicule or hatred. Among the moderns this practice appears to have been employed even to stimulate religious animosity or fury: † and the rarity or absence of it, among a people possessed of such high sarcastic power as the Greeks, suggests that it may have been excluded by the predominating force of a tra-

* Note XIV.

† Lecky's 'Rise and Influence of Rationalism,' vol. ii. p. 125, &c.

ditional reverence, grown into instinct, for the beauty of the human form; having its origin nowhere with greater likelihood than in the early and continued association of that form with the highest objects of religion.

55. I will now refer to the feeling, especially of the Homeric period, concerning the sacredness of the human body against both violation and exposure. The horror of Priam in anticipating his own death at the coming sack of Troy rises to its climax, when he brings into the picture the tearing and defilement by dogs of his own exposed and naked figure.* And the extremest point of punishment threatened to the degraded Thersites appears to be the stripping of his person for the disgust and derision of the camp; and the seaming it with "indecorous" wounds.† Nor was this respect for decency a shallow or shortlived tradition. It was indeed rudely tried; since it came into conflict with the eagerness of the race for high physical activity and athletic development, stimulated to the uttermost by the great national institution of the Games, in which, as Horace said with little exaggeration, the palm of the victor uplifted even the lords of earth to the honours of the gods. Yet, important as it was for perfection in those unparalleled contests to free the person from the restraints of clothing, Thucydides‡ in his Preface tells us that the athletes were formerly covered: that the Lacedæmonians were the first to strip in the arena, and that it was not many years before his time when the fashion reached its height.

* Il. xxii. 66–76.

† Il. ii. 261–64; ἀεικέσσι πληγῇσιν. To appreciate the force of the remark, the passages should be consulted in the original.

‡ Thucyd. i. c. 6. See Aristoph. Νεφ. 972 seqq., on the garb of youths when with their master of gymnastics.

56. But when we are seeking to ascertain the measure of that conception which any given race has formed of our nature, there is perhaps no single test so effective as the position which it assigns to woman. For as the law of force is the law of the brute creation, so, in proportion as he is under the yoke of that law, does man approximate to the brute: and in proportion, on the other hand, as he has escaped from its dominion, is he ascending into the higher sphere of being, and claiming relationship with deity. But the emancipation and due ascendancy of woman are not a mere fact: they are the emphatic assertion of a principle: and that principle is the dethronement of the law of force, and the enthronement of other and higher laws in its place, and in its despite.

57. Outside the pale of Christianity, it would be difficult to find a parallel, in point of elevation, to the Greek woman of the heroic age. Mr. Buckle * candidly acknowledges that her position was then much higher than it had come to be in the most civilised historic period of Greece; and yet he was a writer whose bias, and the general cast of whose opinions, would have disposed him to an opposite conclusion. Again: if the pictures presented by the historical books of the Old Testament and by Homer respectively be compared, candour will claim from us a verdict in favour of the position of the Greek as compared with that of the Hebrew woman. Among the Jews, polygamy was permitted; to the Greeks, as has been said, it was unknown. Tales like that of Ammon and Tamar,† or like that of the Levite and his concubine,‡ are not found even among the deeds of the dissolute Suitors of

* Buckle's 'Lecture on Woman,' in 'Fraser's Magazine,' vol. lvii. pp. 395, 396. † Judges xix. ‡ 2 Sam. xiii.

the Odyssey. Among the Jews the testimony of our Lord is that because of the hardness of their hearts Moses suffered them to put away their wives: but that "from the beginning it was not so."* Apart from the violent contingencies of war, manners seem to have been, in the momentous point of divorce, not very different among the Greeks of the heroic age, from what they had been in "the beginning."

58. The picture of Penelopè, waiting for her husband through the creeping course of twenty years, and of Odysseus yearning in like manner for his wife, is one of the most remarkable in the whole history of human manners; and it would lose little, if anything, of its deeper significance and force, even if we believe that the persons, whom the poet names Odysseus and Penelopè, have never lived. We must observe, too, what it is that, in the mind of Homer, constitutes the extraordinary virtue of the royal matron. It is not the refusal to marry another while her husband is alive, but her stubborn determination not to accept the apparently certain conclusion that he must have ceased to live. Not even the Suitors suggest that, if he be indeed alive, any power can set her free. Scarcely less noteworthy, for the purpose of the present argument, are the immunities which she enjoys even in her painful position. She is importuned, but she is not insulted. She feels horror and aversion, but she has no cause for fear. Such, in the morning of Greek life, was the reverence that hedged a woman, as she sat alone and undefended in the midst of a body of powerful and abandoned men.

59. Again: the famous scene of Hector and Andro-

* St. Matt. xix. 8.

machè,* is not more touching by its immeasurable tenderness, than it is important for the proof which it affords, with reference to the contemporary manners, of what may be called the moral equality of man and wife. And the general effect of the poems is, to give an idea of a social parity, and of a share borne by women in the practical and responsible duties of life, such as we seek in vain, notwithstanding some charming specimens of character, among the Jews. Still less can it be found among the Greeks of the more polished ages. In their annals, we scarce ever hear of a wife or mother, though the names of mistresses and courtesans are entered on the roll of fame, and Phrynè † dedicated in a Phocian temple a gilded statue of herself, which was wrought by the hand of Praxiteles. Indeed, not to speak of the poetry of Euripides, even the most solid and impartial judgments, such as those of Thucydides and Aristotle, were unfavourably warped in their estimate of women.

60. It would, I have no doubt, be possible to illustrate in great detail from ancient records the high value set by the Greeks upon man, in his mind, life, and person. I will mention two instances from Pausanias. An Arcadian, named Skedasos, living at Leuctra, had two daughters, who were violated by Lacedæmonian youths. Unable to bear the shame, they put an end to their lives. Their father, also, having in vain sought justice from the Spartan authorities, sternly recoiled from the disgrace, and destroyed himself. In after times Epaminondas, about to join battle with the Spartans at the place, made offerings and prayers to the insulted maidens and to

* Il. vi. 390 seqq. † Pausanias, x. c. 14, sub fin.

their parent; and then won the victory, which laid low the power of Sparta.

61. The other is of a different, and a yet more singular, character. The statue of Theagenes, the Thasian athlete,* after his death, fell upon an enemy of his, and killed him. The sons of the man, who thus lost his life, brought an action against the statue; and it was thrown into the sea, under a law of Draco, which made inanimate objects punishable for destroying human existence. Nor was this law peculiar to Athens, where it was maintained in the legislation of Solon. For, as we see, it was recognised in Thasos.

62. Now there is an apparent resemblance between this law and the English law of deodand, which involved the forfeiture, says Blackstone,† of "whatever personal chattel is the immediate cause of the death of any reasonable creature." But I think that, with much seeming similarity, the cases are materially different. Deodand was originally a payment to the Sovereign to be applied to pious uses, and seems to have passed into a manorial right, or, in the Germanic codes,‡ into a compensation for homicide, payable to the surviving relatives. But it proceeded upon the principle of making owners pay. Of course they paid in respect of homicide effected through a material instrument. The Greek law purported to inflict punishment upon the inanimate matter itself, for having violated the sanctity of human life. In this essential point it exactly corresponded with the remarkable law of Moses, which said, "If an ox gore a man

* Pausanias, vi. 11, 12.

† Blackstone's Commentaries, i. 8, 16.

‡ Grote's 'History of Greece,' ii. 10, and iii. 104.

that he die, the ox shall be stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten." * But even this provision falls greatly short of the full spirit of the Greek law, since, unlike the statue, the animal that kills is conscious, and gores from excited passion.

63. I pass, however, to a subject of larger scope, and I venture to suggest that the anthropomorphic spirit of the Greek religion was the main source of that excellence in art, which has supplied for after ages a model for imitation, and a tribunal without appeal.

All are aware that the Greek religion was eminently poetical; for it fulfilled in the most striking manner that condition which poetry above all requires, harmony in the relation between the worlds of soul and sense. Every river, fountain, grove, and hill, was associated with the heart and imagination of the Greek; subject, however, always to the condition that they should appear as ruled by a presiding spirit, and that that spirit should be impersonated in the human shape. A poetical religion must, it seems, be favourable to art. The beauty of form, which so much abounded in the country, was also favourable to art. The Athenians, however, are stated not to have been beautiful; and at Sparta, where art was neglected, beauty was immensely prized. And, indeed, the personal beauty of a race is by no means usually found sufficient to produce the development of the fine arts. Again, as to the poetry of religion, and its bearing upon art, while a general connection may be admitted, it is very difficult to define the manner and degree.

64. The practice of image-worship promotes the production of works, first rude and coarse, then more or less

* Exodus xxi. 28.

vulgar and tawdry. Over the whole continent of Europe there is scarcely at this moment an object of popular veneration, which is worthy to be called a work of art. Of the finest remaining works of Greek art, not very many, I imagine, bear the mark of having been intended for worship. The great size required for statues like the Athenè of the Parthenon and the Zeus of Olympia, seems unfavourable to the exhibition of fine art in the highest sense.* In Pausanias we find notices of an immense number of statues in and about the temples: they are not commonly, I think, praised for excellence in this respect; and the mixture of materials, to which we find constant reference, could hardly have been chosen by the artist for the sake of his own proper purpose. I have heard Lord Macaulay give his opinion that this mixture in the Zeus of Phidias at Olympia, made of ivory and gold, simple as was that form of combination, may probably have been due to the necessity of condescension to the popular taste in connection with an object of worship. Although, therefore, the most eminent artists were employed, it does not appear probable that they derived any part of their higher inspiration from the fervour, or the multitude, of the worshippers in the temples.

65. Neither will it avail to urge the great esteem, in which the professors of the arts were held. High indeed it was; and the successions of sculptors in the different schools† seem to have been recorded, apparently with almost as much care as the Archons of Athens, or the Priestesses of Herè at Argos, those landmarks of the history of States. But the question recurs, was their

* Note XV. † Pausanias, in divers passages.

estimation the cause of their excellence, or was their excellence the cause of their estimation; and, if the estimation flowed from the excellence, whence came the excellence itself? Both the one and the other were perhaps due to another cause.

66. That many accessories contributed to the wonderful result I do not doubt. But mainly and essentially, every art and method, every device and every mental habit, in the language of Aristotle, has an end. It is modelled upon the end at which it aims; and by that end its greatness, or its littleness, is measured. Now the climax of all art, it seems to be agreed, is the rendering of the human form. What, then, could be so calculated to raise this representation to the acmè of its excellence, as the belief that the human form was not only the tabernacle, but the original and proper shape, the inseparable attribute, of Deity itself? In the quaint language of George Herbert,

> "He that aims the moon
> Shoots higher much, than he that means a tree."

And again as Tennyson has sung:

> "It was my duty to have loved the highest:
> We needs must love the highest when we see it,
> Not Lancelot, nor another." *

67. It was this perpetual presentation of the highest to the mind of the Greek artist, that cheered him, and rewarded him, and yet, while it cheered him and rewarded him, still ever spurred him on in his pursuit. Whatever he had done, more remained to do,

> "Nil actum reputans dum quid superesset agendum."

* Idylls of the King: Guinevere.

The desire, that marks an unbounded ambition, had been granted; he had always more worlds to conquer. The divine was made familiar to him, by correspondence of shape: but on the other side, its elements, which it was his business to draw forth and indicate to men, reached far away into the infinite. And I know not what true definition there is for any age or people of the highest excellence in any kind, unless it be perpetual effort upwards in pursuit of an object higher than ourselves, higher than our works, higher even than our hopes, yet beckoning us on from hour to hour, and always permitting us to apprehend in part.

68. I venture, then, to propound at least for consideration the opinion, that the fundamental cause of the transcendent excellence of the Greek artist lay in his being, by his birth and the tradition of his people, as well as with every favouring accessory, both in idea and in form, and in such a sense as no other artist was, a worker upon deity, conceived as residing, invariably, if not essentially, in the human form. It is hardly necessary to observe how the rich and many-sided composition of the Greek mythology favoured the artist in his work, by answering to the many-sided development of the mind and life of man.

69. Unconsciously then to himself, and in a sphere of almost parochial narrowness, the Greek not only earned himself an immortal fame, but was equipping from age to age a great School of Art, to furnish principles and models made ready to the hand of that purer and higher civilisation which was to be; and over the preparation of which, all the while, Divine Providence was brooding, like the Spirit on the face of the waters, till the fulness of time should come.

70. But besides the Art and the Poetry of the Greeks, there were other provinces in which their achievements were no less remarkable; and, with refence to the present argument, I must shortly touch upon their Philosophy. The first philosophers of the Greek race were not for the most part natives and inhabitants of Greece, nor subject exclusively to Greek influences. Their speculations turned mainly on the nature of the first principle, and partook of an eastern spirit. But when philosophy took up her abode in the country where Hellenism was supreme and without a rival, that human element, which lay so profoundly embedded in the whole constitution of the Hellenic mind, soon unfolded itself in the region of speculative thought; and the true meaning of the famous saying that Socrates called down philosophy from Heaven would seem to be, that he gave expression to the genius of his country by propounding, as the prime subject for the study of man, the nature, constitution, and destiny of man himself.

71. And the illustrious series of disciples, some of them probably greater than their master, who followed his example, were not therein aping or adopting the mere peculiarity of an individual, but obeying a congenial impulse, that sprang from the depths of their being. Whatever philosophy was to be indigenous in Greece could not but be predominantly and profoundly human; and their power and fame, as analysts of our unfathomable constitution, are fresh and unabated at the present hour. Fashion may wave her wand, but it is with small result. Idolatrous veneration of course has at times begotten temporary reaction and comparative neglect; but the power of Greek culture seems again and again to assert itself by virtue of the law which makes all things

find their level; and, since it came into existence, it has never ceased to be, in the most instructed periods, the chief criterion and means of the highest intellectual training: not, of course, necessarily for each individual, but for classes, and for countries.

72. The point, however, to which I wish to draw particular attention at this moment, is the large and well-balanced view, to which Greek Philosophy attained, of the compound nature of man.

Never, probably, has there appeared upon the stage of the world so remarkable an union, as in the Greeks, of corporal with mental excellence. From the beginning of the race, Homer shared the privilege of his most gorgeous epithet * between battle and debate. The Odes of such a poet as Pindar, handing onwards the tradition of the Twenty-third Iliad, commemorate, so to speak, the marriage of athletic exercise with the gift of Song. We do not trace among the Greeks that contrast, which is found so rude and sharp elsewhere, between energy in the body and energy in the brain. The Greek was in this respect like Adam in the noble verse of Milton,

"For contemplation he and valour form'd."

73. And the Greek philosophy was for nothing more remarkable than the manner in which it not only asserted but felt, as an elementary law, the place of the Body in human education.

This was with no exclusive or peculiar view to what we should call utilitarian purposes, such as those of defence or industry, or even art. It seems to have been rather an ample recognition of the right of the

* κυδιάνειρα. Il. i. 490; iv. 225, *et alibi.*

body to be cared for, and to be reared in its various organs up to the highest excellence it is capable of attaining, as being, what indeed it is, not a mere vesture or tool, or appendage of the soul, but, like the soul, an integral part of man himself.

74. This plenitude and accuracy of view on such a subject is peculiarly worthy of note on some special grounds. In general, the philosophies of the world, outside of Christianity, have shown a tendency to fluctuate between sensuality on the one hand, and, on the other, a contempt and hatred of matter, and a disposition to identify it with the principle of evil. The philosophy of Socrates, of Plato, and of Aristotle, seems to have steered clear and safe between this Scylla and this Charybdis. But again, the Greek saw, as all men see, the body parted from the soul at death, and hastening rapidly, as by the law of its nature, to corruption. To none could this severance, and its mournful and painful incidents, be more repulsive than to him, with his delicate perceptions and his lively emotions. Of a future existence in any shape he usually knew, or even surmised, little; of the revival of the body, or of the reunion hereafter of the two great factors of the human being, he had yet less conception. We may say then that he lay under every temptation to a disparaging view of the body, and of its office. Yet, in spite of this immense disadvantage, it fell to him to find a place for the body in the philosophy of human nature, and to incorporate the principle thus conceived in laws, usages, and institutions, with a clearness and general justness of view, by which Christian learning has done, and will yet do, well to profit. What with us is somewhat dubious and fluctuating both in theory and in practice, with him was familiar and ele-

mentary in both; and the teachers of mental accomplishment taught also the science, if not the art, of bodily excellence.

75. Thus for example Plato, in his Treatise on the State, has to consider what men are fit to be chosen for rulers. They should if possible, he says, have the advantage of personal beauty. They must be energetic: and he therefore proceeds to treat of the character of the φιλόπονος,* or diligent man. They must be ready and keen in study: for human souls are much more cowardly in strong studies, than in exercises of corporal strength: since, in the former, they bear all the burden, instead of sharing it with the body. But philosophy itself, he admits, has fallen into some dishonour, from a tendency to partiality in handling this question. The truly diligent man, then, must not be halt or one-sided in his diligence. If he be fond of athletic exercise and of sports, but not apt for learning and inquiry, then he is but half-diligent. And no less "lame" will he be, says the philosopher, if, addicted to mental pursuits, he neglects the training of the body, and of the organs with which it is endowed. This may serve for a sample, but it is a sample only, of the large and complete grasp of the Greek philosophy upon the nature of man: and I connect this largeness and completeness with the fact that the Greek, from the nature of his religion, cherished in a special degree the idea of the near association of human existence, in soul and body, with that existence which we necessarily regard as the largest and most complete, namely with the Divine.

76. It may indeed be said, that the Greek lowered and

* Plat. de Rep., B. vii. p. 535.

contaminated the Divine idea by weak and by vile elements carried into it from the human. Yes: this and much more may be said, and said with truth. Nothing can be more humbling or more instructive, than the total failure of the Greek mind, with all its powers, either to attain, or even to make progress towards attaining, the greater ends of creation by rendering man either good or happy. This is the negative but vitally important purpose, which the Greek of old may have been destined to fulfil; the purpose of casting down the strongholds of our pride, by first showing man how great he is, and then leaving him to see how little, when standing alone, is all his greatness, if it be measured with reference to its results in accomplishing those ends of life, without which every other end is vain. But I am not now engaged in endeavouring to ascertain what Greek life, or what the Greek mind, was in itself, and for itself; nor for what negative or secondary uses the study of it may be available. I wish to point out in some degree what it was for a purpose beyond itself, what materials it was preparing for our use, how it was, if I may so express myself, the secular counterpart of the Gospel; how it became, in one word, the great intellectual factor of the Christian civilisation.

77. Now it is not, I think, difficult to see that materials and instruments, such as it furnished, were required for the work that had to be done. I will not attempt by argument to show, that all the powers and capacities of man, being the work of God, must have their proper place in His designs; and that the evil in the world arises not from their use but from their misuse, not from their active working, each according to its place in the Providential order, but from their having gone astray, as

the planets would go astray if the centripetal force, that controls their action, were withdrawn.

78. We see then in the Greeks, beyond all question, these two things: first, a peculiar and powerful element of anthropomorphism pervading their religion, and giving to it a distinctive character: secondly, a remarkable fulness, largeness, subtlety, elevation, and precision in their conception of human nature; taking shape in, or at least accompanying, an immense vigour both of speculation and of action; a language of marvellous reach, elasticity, variety, and power; a really scientific excellence in art never elsewhere attained; and an eminence in the various branches of letters which has given to them, for more than two thousand years, the place of first authority in the cultivated world. The Latin literature, though it has both a character and a purpose of its own, is, in its most splendid elements, derivative from the Greek.

79. Now, if we survey with care and candour the present wealth of the world—I mean its wealth intellectual, moral, and spiritual—we find that Christianity has not only contributed to the patrimony of man its brightest and most precious jewels, but has likewise been what our Saviour pronounced it, the salt or preserving principle of all the residue, and has maintained its health, so far as it has been maintained at all, against corrupting agencies. But, the salt is one thing, the thing salted is another: and, as in the world of nature, so in the world of mind and of human action, there is much that is outside of Christianity, that harmonises with it, that revolves, so to speak, around it, but that did not and could not grow out of it. It seems to have been for the filling up of this outline, for the occupation of this broad sphere of exertion and enjoyment, that the Greeks

were, in the counsels of Providence, ordained to labour: that so the Gospel, produced in the fulness of time, after the world's long gestation, might have its accomplished work in rearing mankind up to its perfection, first in the spiritual life, but also, and through that spiritual life, in every form of excellence, for which the varied powers and capacities of the race had been created.

80. If this be so, it is quite plain that the Greeks have their place in the Providential order, aye, and in the Evangelical Preparation, as truly and really as the children of Abraham themselves.

81. But indeed there is no need, in order to a due appreciation of our debt to the ancient Greeks, that we should either forget or disparage the function, which was assigned by the Almighty Father to His most favoured people. Much profit, says St. Paul, had the Jew in every way. He had the oracles of God: he had the custody of the promises: he was the steward of the great and fundamental conception of the unity of God, the sole and absolute condition under which the Divine idea could be upheld among men at its just elevation. No poetry, no philosophy, no art of Greece, ever embraced, in its most soaring and widest conceptions, that simple law of love towards God and towards our neighbour, on which "two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," and which supplied the moral basis of the new dispensation.

82. There is one history, and that the most touching and most profound of all, for which we should search in vain through all the pages of the classics,—I mean the history of the human soul in its relations with its Maker; the history of its sin, and grief, and death, and of the way of its recovery to hope and life, and to enduring joy. For the exercises of strength and skill,

for the achievements and for the enchantments of wit, of eloquence, of art, of genius, for the imperial games of politics and war—let us seek them on the shores of Greece. But if the first among the problems of life be how to establish the peace, and restore the balance, of our inward being; if the highest of all conditions in the existence of the creature be his aspect towards the God to whom he owes his being, and in whose great hand he stands; then let us make our search elsewhere. All the wonders of the Greek civilisation heaped together are less wonderful, than is the single Book of Psalms.

83. Palestine was weak and despised, always obscure, oftentimes and long trodden down beneath the feet of imperious masters. On the other hand, Greece, for a thousand years,

"Confident from foreign purposes," *

repelled every invader from her shores. Fostering her strength in the keen air of freedom, she defied, and at length overthrew, the mightiest of existing empires; and when finally she felt the resistless grasp of the masters of all the world, them too, at the very moment of her subjugation, she herself subdued to her literature, language, arts, and manners.† Palestine, in a word, had no share of the glories of our race; while they blaze on every page of the history of Greece with an overpowering splendour. Greece had valour, policy, renown, genius, wisdom, wit; she had all, in a word, that this world could give her; but the flowers of Paradise, which blossom at the best but thinly, blossomed in Palestine alone.

* King John, ii. 1. † Note XVI.

84. And yet, as the lower parts of our bodily organisation are not less material than the higher to the safety and well-being of the whole, so Christianity itself was not ordained to a solitary existence in man, but to find helps meet for itself in the legitimate use of every faculty, and in the gradually accumulated treasures of the genius, sagacity, and industry of the human family. Besides the loftiest part of the work of Providence entrusted to the Hebrew race, there was other work to do, and it was done elsewhere. It was requisite to make ready the materials not only of a divine renewal and of a moral harmony for the world, but also for a thorough and searching culture of every power and gift of man in all his relations to the world and to his kind; so as to lift up his universal nature to the level, upon which his relation as a creature to his Creator, and as a child to his Father, was about to be established.

85. And the question arises whether, among the auxiliaries required to complete the training process for our race, there were not to be found some which were of a quality, I will not say to act as a corrective to Christianity, but to act as a corrective to the narrow views, and to the partial excesses, which might follow upon certain modes of conceiving and of applying it. Doubtless the just idea of their general purpose is, that they were a collection of implements and materials to assist in the cultivation of the entire nature of man, and in the consecration of all his being to the glory and to the practical designs of his Maker. Yet in part they might have a purpose more special still; the purpose of assigning due bounds to the action of impulses springing out of Christianity itself.

86. Now, that narrow conception, which I have men-

tioned, of the Jews as virtually the sole object of the Providential designs of God, while it began doubtless in a devout sentiment, passed into superstition when it led men to assign to the Jewish people every imaginable gift and accomplishment, and into virtual impiety when it came to imply that the Almighty had little care for the residue of His creatures. And certainly it was not to Scripture itself that opinions like these were due. In a Dissertation 'On the Prophecies of the Messiah dispersed among the Heathen,' Bishop Horsley has shown what a large amount of testimony is yielded by the Sacred Books to the remaining knowledge of the true God among the races in the neighbourhood of Judea. With them religion seems to have been for long periods, as was also to no small extent the religious practice of the Jews, an inconsistent combination of lingering and struggling truth with rampant error. Melchisedec, the type of Christ; Job, one of the chosen patrons of faith and patience; were of blood foreign to the patriarchal race. The same agency of the prophetic order, which was employed to correct and guide the Jew, was not withheld from his neighbours; Balaam, among the Moabites, was a prophet inspired by the Most High. Of the minor prophetical books of the Old Testament two are expressly devoted to setting forth the burden of Nineveh, and the dealings of God with its inhabitants: and Eastern Magi were, in the words of Bishop Horsley, "the first worshippers of Mary's holy Child." *

87. A system of religion, however absolutely perfect for its purpose, however divine in its conception and expression, yet of necessity becomes human too, from the

* 'Dissertation,' &c., p. 117.

first moment of its contact with humanity; from the very time, that is to say, when it begins to do its proper work by laying hold upon the hearts and minds of men, mingling, as the leaven in the dough, with all that they contain, and unfolding and applying itself in the life and conduct of the individual, and in the laws, institutions, and usages of society. In the building up of the human temple, the several portions of the work, while sustaining and strengthening each other, confine each other also, like the stones of a wall, to their proper place and office in the fabric.

88. Divine truth, as it is contained in the Gospel, is addressed to the wants and uses of a nature not simple but manifold; and is manifold itself. Though dependent upon one principle, it consists of many parts; and in order to preserve reciprocally the due place and balance of those parts, means that we call human are available, as well as means more obviously divine; and secular forms, and social influences, all adjusted by one and the same Governor of the world, are made to serve the purposes, that have their highest expression in the Kingdom of Grace. The Gospel aims not at impairing or precluding this equilibrium, but at restoring it: and in the restoration it accepts, nay courts, and by natural law requires, the aid of secondary means.

89. It is manifest indeed that there was in Christianity that which man might easily and innocently carry into such an excess, as, though it would have ceased to be Christian, would not have ceased to seem so; and would, under a sacred title, have tended to impair the healthful and complete development of his being. Rousseau*

* Rousseau, 'Contrat Social,' b. iv. c. viii.

objects to the Christian system, that it is opposed to social good order and prosperity; because it teaches a man to regard himself as a citizen of another world, and thus diverts him from the performance of his duties as a member of civil society. "Far from attaching the hearts of the citizens to the state, it detaches them from it, as from all other earthly things. I know nothing more opposed to the social spirit. . . . A society of true Christians would no longer be a society of men. . . . What matters it to be free or slave in this vale of misery? The one thing needful is to go to Paradise, and submission to calamity is an additional means of getting there."

90. In an age and in a country such as ours, it is not required, it is scarcely allowable, to seem to depreciate those various forms of self-restraint and self-conquest which the spirit of man, vexed in its sore conflict with the flesh and with the world, has in other times so largely employed to establish the supremacy of the soul, by trampling upon sense, and appetite, and all corporal existence. Even in the time of the Apostles, it seems to have been manifest that a tendency to excess in this direction had begun to operate in the Christian Church. As time passed on, and as the spirit of the unrenewed world became more rampant within the sacred precinct, the reaction against it likewise grew more vehement and eager. The deserts of Egypt were peopled with thousands upon thousands of anchorites;* who forswore every human relation, extinguished every appetite, and absorbed every motive, every idea, every movement of our complex nature in the great but single function of the relation to the unseen world.† True and earnest in their Chris-

* Note XVII. † Note XVIII.

tian warfare, they notwithstanding represent a spirit of exaggeration, which it was requisite to check; uprooting what they ought rather to have pruned, and destroying what they ought to have chastised, and mastered, and converted to purposes of good.

91. That internecine war with sin, which is of the very essence of Christianity, seems to have been understood by them as a war against the whole visible and sensible world, against the intellectual life, against a great portion of their own normal nature: and though, as regarded themselves, even their exaggeration was pardonable, and in many respects a noble error, yet its unrestricted sway and extension would have left man a maimed, a stunted, a distorted creature. And it would have done more than this. By severing the Gospel from all else that is beautiful and glorious in creation, it would have exposed the spiritual teacher to a resistance not only vehement but just, and would have placed the kingdom of grace in permanent and hopeless discord with the kingdoms of nature, reason, truth, and beauty, kingdoms established by the very same Almighty Hand.

92. Those principles of repression, which were indispensable as the medicine of man, were unfit for his food. What was requisite, however, was not to expel them, and thereby to revert to the mental riot and the moral uncleanness of heathenism, but to check their usurpations, and to keep them within their bounds; and this was to be effected not by prohibition or disparagement, but by vindicating for every part, and power, and work, of human nature, and for every office of life, its proper place in the Divine order and constitution of the world. The seed of this comprehensive philosophy was supplied by the words of the Apostle: "Whatsoever things are

true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." * And so the solid and fruitful materials of the Greek civilisation came in aid, by a wise Providence, of the restorative principles, precepts, and powers of the Gospel, to take part in securing a well-balanced development of the powers of the Christian system, and to prevent the instruments, designed to eradicate the seeds of disease, from subverting the yet higher agencies appointed for the fostering and development of life in every region of our being and our activity.

93. Volumes might be written with profit to trace the application of the principles touched upon in this Address to the whole history of the Church, and of the Christian civilisation, down to the present day; and, the more we said, the more there would remain to say. That which I have now attempted is no more, in effect, than a suggestion, which may open the way for others into a wide and ever-widening field. And if that suggestion be just it will be difficult to deny its importance. Let us glance in a few concluding words at some of its results.

94. First, it places on high and safe grounds that genial primacy of the Greeks in letters and in human culture, to the acknowledgment of which Christian Europe has been guided not so much by a logical process, or a definite forethought, as by a sure instinct which has received the after confirmation of a long experience. Nor can this primacy be justly disturbed by the multiplication, and the energetic and growing pursuit, of those branches

* Phil. iv. 8.

of knowledge for which this age has been so remarkable. For Aristotle it was excusable to regard the heavenly bodies as objects nobler than man. But Christianity has sealed and stamped the title of our race, as the crown and flower of the visible creation: and with this irreversible sentence in their favour, the studies, well called studies of humanity, should not resent nor fear, but should favour and encourage all other noble research having for its object the globe on which we live, the tribes with which it is peopled in land, air, and sea, the powers drawn forth from nature or yet latent in her unexplored recesses, or the spaces of that vast system—

"Ultra flammantia mœnia mundi,"

to which our earth belongs.

95. But more than this: we live in times when the whole nature of our relation to the unseen world is widely, eagerly, and assiduously questioned. Sometimes we are told of general laws, so conceived as to be practically independent either of a Lawgiver or a Judge. Sometimes of a necessity working all things to uniform results, but seeming to crush and to bury under them the ruins of our will, our freedom, our personal responsibility. Sometimes of a private judgment, which we are to hold upon the hard condition of taking nothing upon trust, of passing by, at the outset of our mental life, the whole preceding education of the world, of owning no debt to those who have gone before without a regular process of proof, in a word of beginning anew, each man for himself: a privilege which I had thought was restricted to the lower orders of creation, where the parent infuses no prejudices into its litter or its fry. Such are the fancies which go abroad. Such are the clouds which career in

heaven, and pass between us and the sun; and make men idly think, that what they see not, is not; and blot the prospects of what is, in so many and such true respects, a happy and a hopeful age.

96. It is I think an observation of Saint Augustine, that those periods are critical and formidable, when the power of putting questions runs greatly in advance of the pains to answer them. Such appears to be, in regard to the province of the unseen, the period in which we live. And all among us, who are called in any manner to move in the world of thought, may well ask, who is sufficient for these things? Who can with just and firm hand sever the transitory from the durable, and the accidental from the essential, in old opinions? Who can combine, in the measures which reason would prescribe, reverence and gratitude to the past with a sense of the new claims, new means, new duties of the present? Who can be stout and earnest to do battle for the Truth, and yet hold sacred, as he ought, the freedom of inquiry, and cherish, as he ought, a chivalry of controversy like the ancient chivalry of arms?

97. One persuasion at least let us embrace: one error let us avoid. Let us embrace this persuasion, that Christianity will by her inherent resources find for herself a philosophy, equal to all the shifting and all the growing wants of the time. Let us avoid the error of seeking to cherish a Christianity of isolation. The Christianity which is now and hereafter to flourish, and, through its power in the inner circles of human thought, to influence ultimately, in some manner more adequate than now, the masses of mankind, must be such as of old the Wisdom of God was described.

"For in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one

only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things. . . .

"For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness." *

It must be filled full with human and genial warmth, in close sympathy with every true instinct and need of man, regardful of the just titles of every faculty of his nature, apt to associate with and make its own all, under whatever name, which goes to enrich and enlarge the patrimony of the race.

98. And therefore it is well that we should look out over the field of history, and see if haply its records, the more they are unfolded, do or do not yield us new materials for the support of faith. Some at least among us experience has convinced that, just as fresh wonder and confirmed conviction flow from examining the structure of the universe, and its countless inhabitants, and their respective adaptations to the purposes of their being and to the use of man, the same results will flow in yet larger measure from tracing the footmarks of the Most High in the seemingly bewildered paths of human history. Everywhere, before us, and behind us, and around us, and above us and beneath, we shall find the Power which—

> "Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent." †

* 'Wisdom of Solomon,' viii. 22, 23, 26.

† Pope's 'Essay on Man,' iv.

And, together with the Power, we shall find the Goodness and the Wisdom, of which that sublime Power is but a minister. Nor can that wisdom and that goodness anywhere shine forth with purer splendour, than when the Divine forethought, working from afar, in many places, and through many generations, so adjusts beforehand the acts and the affairs of men, as to let them all converge upon a single point; namely, upon that redemption of the world, by God made Man, in which all the rays of His glory are concentrated, and from which they pour forth a flood of healing light even over the darkest and saddest places of creation.

99. Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Professors, and Gentlemen, I commend to your notice and your impartial research the subject of the foregoing remarks. It is at least a less unworthy offering than the mere commonplaces of taking leave. Yet I claim one remaining moment to convey to you my gratitude for your confidence, to assure you that I shall ever feel a lively interest in all that pertains to the welfare of your famous University, and to bid you respectfully farewell.

NOTES.

Note I., p. 39.

This appropriating power of the Greeks is well expressed in a passage quoted by Eusebius from Diodorus, who is describing the view taken of that power by the Egyptians (Præp. Evang. ii. 6): *καθόλου δέ φασι τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἐξιδιάζεσθαι τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους Αἰγυπτίων ἥρωάς τε καὶ θεούς.*

Note II., p. 40.

These sentiments are not only contained in particular passages of the 'Præparatio,' but run through the whole work. See for instance:

On the foreign origin of the Greek religion, B. i. 6, i. 10, ii. 1, and ii. 3. The Hellenic *μυθολογίαι κάτωθεν ὁρμῶνται*, iii. 4.

On the composition of the old religions, v. 3.

On the commendation of the Greek genius and the philosophers, i. 6 (*τά σεμνὰ τῆς γενναίας Ἑλλήνων φιλοσοφίας*), i. 8, i. 10, xi. 1, and ii. 6 (*ὁ θαυμάσιος Πλάτων . . . ὁ πάντων ἄριστος*), v. 33.

On the light of nature, ii. 6 (*φύσει καὶ αὐτοδιδάκτοις ἐννοίαις, μᾶλλον δὲ θεοδιδάκτοις*), and elsewhere *φυσικαὶ ἔννοιαι*.

On the appropriations from the Hebrews, Books ix. and x.

Note III., p. 40.

Celsus appears to have used the same imputation of being copyists against the Hebrews: and to have been confuted by Origen on account of the greater antiquity of the Jewish histories. Stillingfleet, Orig. Sac. ch. i. (vol. i. p. 16, Oxf. ed.).

NOTE IV., p. 41.

Saint Augustine traced the prophecies of Christ in the Sibylline Books (De Civ. Dei, B. xviii. c. 23). Like the other Christian apologists, he commonly treats the heathen deities as real spirits of evil. He seems, in part, like Eusebius, to resolve the personages of the Greek and Roman Mythology into, 1. Men deified after death, 2. Elements or Nature Powers, 3. Dæmones (De Civ. Dei, B. xviii. c. 14). He recognises divine aid given to the philosophers of Greece (De Civ. Dei, B. ii. c. 7): and in tracing the history of the two *Civitates*, the *Cœlestis*, and the *Terrestris*, he says (B. xvi. c. 10), that probably there were children of the former in the latter, as well as of the latter in the former.

NOTE V., p. 48.

Mr. Grote remarks upon this anthropomorphic genius of the Hellenic religion, under the name of an universal "tendency to personification."—'History of Greece,' i. 462. Mr. Ruskin has some striking observations on the same subject.

NOTE VI., p. 49.

Mr. Max Müller says, in his most able work on 'Language,' vol. ii. p. 433, that Apollo drew to himself the worship of the Dorian family, Athenè of the Ionian, Poseidon of the Æolian, but that the worship of Zeus reached over all. I venture to doubt the precise accuracy of this classification. The Greek mythology was eminently favourable, as one of popular idolatry, to the development of particular local worships, and the preferences were much associated with race. But it would surprise me to see any proof that the worship of Apollo, or that of Athenè, was anything less than universal among the Greeks. [Nor can the character of Poseidon be correctly appreciated, without taking into view the tradition of the Zeus-Poseidon.—W. E. G., 1879.] The invaluable work of Pausanias, with its careful and patient enumerations, appears to form a conclusive standard of appeal on this subject.

On the character of Apollo, see C. O. Müller's 'Dorians,' Lewis and Tuffnell's translation, i. 329. [The most comprehensive and marked feature of it is his unconditional and perfect conformity to the will of Zeus.—W. E. G., 1879.]

NOTE VII., p. 51.

The word "jovial" appears to be one of that group of words, too little noticed, which have come into the English tongue direct from

the Italian, and to abound in our old authors. It is explained by Johnson as meaning, 1. Under the influence of Jupiter, 2. Gay, airy, merry. But I do not find in any of our dictionaries or word-books, which I have consulted, any notice of what appears to be its *differentia*, and to make it reflect the idea of the Olympian life: namely, that in its proper use it does not mean merriment simply, but an elevated or royal kind of merriment. Thus Drayton speaks of the "princely jovial fowl": and the sense is exactly touched in a speech of Lear (Act iv. Scene 6)—

> What?
> I will be jovial: *come, come, I am a king*,
> My masters, know you that.

This distinctive colouring of the sense has been in part rubbed out: yet jovial is not even now synonymous with merry: we should more properly say jovial men, merry children, than *vice versâ*.

NOTE VIII., p. 52

It is worthy of remark, that in Homer the political life of man is reflected even as to some portion of its detail by the divine life. The institution of the βουλή, or Council, was already well marked off from that of the ἀγορή, or Assembly. So the ordinary meeting on Olympus seems to be the βουλή, but this, which precedes the Theomachy, to correspond with the Assembly.

NOTE IX., p. 55.

The Sun in the 'Iliad,' see Il. xviii.—

> ἠέλιον δ' ἀκάμαντα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη
> πέμψεν ἐπ' Ὠκεανοῖο ῥοὰς ἀέκοντα νέεσθαι.

Why, being thus passive, and scarcely animate, is the planet represented as unwilling? The answer must be founded on conjecture. But I conceive it to be probably this. The Trojan worship clearly appears to have been more elemental than the Greek: so the Sun was unwilling to cut short that famous day, which was to be the last day of prosperity to the Trojan arms.

In the 'Odyssey,' we have no mention of the worship of the Sun by the Greeks: and when Eurupulos in Thrinakiè persuades his com-

panions to slay the oxen of that deity for food, he says, "when we return to Ithaca, we can make him a rich temple and precinct, with abundant votive gifts" (Od. xii. 346):

πίονα νηὸν
τεύξομεν, ἐν δέ κε θεῖμεν ἀγάλματα παλλὰ καὶ ἐσθλά,

thus raising the inference that he had none already existing in that very small island.

NOTE X., p. 55.

On the Invocation of Rivers.

It is probable that these may have been admitted more or less into purely local worship: the old Pelasgian system could not be, and as we know was not, without influence, especially at a distance from the greater centres, upon the religion of the country. It may be from this cause that Achilles in Troja not only invokes his own Spercheios, but mentions his father's prayer and vow to offer an hecatomb to the Stream, in the place where was its glebe and altar. In this class of cases, the anthropomorphic force of the Greek system showed itself by investing the rivers with human forms. Acheloos, the most famous of them, fought against Herakles for Deianira, sought her hand, and had many other wives. Odysseus invokes the river in Corfù, but then he is in the sphere of the Outer geography, and of a theology differing from the Greek. Asteropaios, a Paionian hero, is grandson to the River Axios. My conjecture respecting the significance of the dual name, Xanthos and Scamandros, is only one step in advance of the most current, and also conjectural, interpretation, which treats the divine name as senior, the human one as more recent.

NOTE XI., p. 56.

The single clear trace that I remember to have perceived in Homer of the elemental creed is this, that, in one single passage, he calls the sacrificial fire by the name of Hephaistos, the god of fire. Il. ii. 426.

NOTE XII., p. 62.

On this subject, as a testimony *instar omnium*, see the passage in Aristophanes, Νεφ. 1087–1100.

NOTE XIII., p. 62.

"Philippus of Crotona was actually deified by the inhabitants of Segeste, and had sacrifices offered to him in his lifetime on account of his beauty. Cypselus instituted prizes for beauty: while such was the honour conferred by its possession, that Elpinice, the sister of Cimon, did not hesitate to sit as model to Polygnotus."—Falkener's 'Dædalus,' p. 33, note.

NOTE XIV., p. 63.

On the contrary, in the Clouds, v. 540, Aristophanes takes credit to himself because his play made no jest upon baldness—

οὐδ' ἔσκωψε τοὺς φαλάκρους,

and this is believed to be a rebuke to Eupolis for having condescended to ridicule Aristophanes himself on the score of baldness (Mitchell in loc.). The conclusion I have stated in the text as to caricature, seems to me, on the whole, to be supported by the collection of instances in the work of Champfleury. ('Histoire de la Caricature Antique,' par Champfleury. Dentu, Paris.) Neither do I find anything to shake this conclusion in the recent work of Mr. Wright ('History of Caricature and of Grotesque in Art.' London, 1865). On the use of caricature for religion, see Lecky's 'Rationalism,' vol. ii. p. 1.

NOTE XV., p. 70.

The Zeus of Phidias at Olympia is stated to have been sixty feet high, and the Athenè of the Parthenon forty.—Falkener's 'Dædalus,' p. 94.

NOTE XVI., p. 80.

It has been, perhaps, too little noticed that the expedition of Alexander, by carrying not only the political, but especially the intellectual, dominion of Greece through the East, was no less signally a Preparation for the Gospel than was the growth of the Roman Power, which placed the civilised world under the sway of a single sceptre (S. Aug. de Civ. Dei, B. xviii. c. 22). The dissolution of Alexander's empire after his death has made us take for a short-lived, meteor-like phenomenon, what really was a great work, with results not less permanent than widespread. Its importance reached a climax in the Translation of the Jewish Scriptures executed by the Seventy.

Note XVII., p. 84.

Vividly described by Lecky, 'Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe,' vol. ii. p. 28. The same principle runs through Church History: as where the admirable Mère Marie-Angélique Arnauld describes the Infirmaries in her convent as "basses et humides comme des caves," making the nuns ill, and yet "cela ne les dégoutoit point. Dieu nous en envoya plusieurs." (Relations du Port-Royal, p. 30.)

Note XVIII., p. 84.

Saint Augustine says of the body, *ad ipsam naturam hominis pectinet* (De Civ. Dei, i. 13). Eusebius, in his account of the Hebrew religion, shows a tendency to depreciate this constituent part of man, when he relates that the Jews viewed it simply as a space for the soul to dwell in (τὸ δὲ, τούτον χώραν περιβολῆς ἐπέχειν), and says all bodily pleasures are no higher than those of the brute creation (B. v. c. 4). Saint Augustine had felt deeply the influence of the Greek philosophy, and hence perhaps it is that with his warmly-coloured views he combined so much breadth of conception.

III.

A CHAPTER OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

1868.

"Blame not, before thou hast examined the truth: understand first, and then rebuke."—ECCLESIASTICUS, ch. ii.

INTRODUCTION.

AT a time when the Established Church of Ireland is on her trial, it is not unfair that her assailants should be placed upon their trial too: most of all, if they have at one time been her sanguine defenders.

But, if not the matter of the indictment against them, at any rate that of their defence, should be kept apart, as far as they are concerned, from the public controversy, that it may not darken or perplex the greater issue.

It is in the character of the author of a book called 'The State in its Relations with the Church,' that I offer these pages to those who may feel a disposition to examine them. They were written at the date attached to them; but their publication has been delayed until after the stress of the general election. [November 1868.]

1. AUTOBIOGRAPHY is commonly interesting; but there can, I suppose, be little doubt that, as a general rule, it should be posthumous. The close of an active career

supplies an obvious exception; for this resembles the gentle death which, according to ancient fable, was rather imparted than inflicted by the tender arrows of Apollo and of Artemis. I have asked myself many times, during the present year, whether peculiar combinations of circumstance might not also afford a warrant at times for departure from the general rule, so far as some special passage of life is concerned; and whether I was not myself now placed in one of those special combinations.

2. The motives, which incline me to answer these questions in the affirmative, are mainly two. First, that the great and glaring change in my course of action with respect to the Established Church of Ireland is not the mere eccentricity, or even perversion, of an individual mind, but connects itself with silent changes, which are advancing in the very bed and basis of modern society. Secondly, that the progress of a great cause, signal as it has been and is, appears liable nevertheless to suffer in point of credit, if not of energy and rapidity, from the real or supposed delinquencies of a person, with whose name for the moment it happens to be specially associated.

3. One thing is clear: that if I am warranted in treating my own case as an excepted case, I am bound so to treat it. It is only with a view to the promotion of some general interest, that the public can becomingly be invited to hear more, especially in personal history, about an individual, of whom they already hear too much. But if it be for the general interest to relieve "an enterprise of pith and moment" from the odium of baseness, and from the lighter reproach of precipitancy, I must make the attempt; though the obtrusion of the first person singular, and of all that it carries in its train, must be irksome alike to the reader and the writer.

4. So far, indeed, as my observation has gone, the Liberal party of this country have stood fire unflinchingly under the heavy volleys which have been fired into its camp with ammunition, that had been drawn from depositories full only of matter personal to myself. And, with the confidence they entertain in the justice and wisdom of the policy they recommend, it would have been weak and childish to act otherwise. Still, I should be glad to give them the means of knowing that the case may not after all be so scandalous as they are told. In the year 1827, if I remember right, when Mr. Canning had just become Prime Minister, an effort was made to support him in the town of Liverpool, where the light and music of his eloquence had not yet died away, by an Address to the Crown. The proposal was supported by an able and cultivated Unitarian Minister, Mr. Shepherd, who had been one of Mr. Canning's opponents at former periods in the Liverpool elections. Vindicating the consistency of his course, he said he was ready to support the devil himself, if it had been necessary, in doing good. This was a succinct and rough manner of disposing of the question in the last resort. I hope, however, that those who sustain the Liberal policy respecting the Established Church of Ireland, will not be driven to so dire an extremity.

5. It can hardly be deemed on my part an unnatural desire, that political friends, and candid observers, should on grounds of reason and knowledge, and not merely from friendly prepossession, feel themselves warranted in disbelieving the justice of language such as by way of example I subjoin. I must, however, suppose that the author of it is persuaded of its fairness and justice, since he bears Her Majesty's commission; and his statement is

adopted and published by a brother-officer, who is himself a candidate for Berwick in the ministerial interest, and therefore (I presume) not particularly squeamish on the subject of political consistency, although I entertain no doubt that both are gallant, upright, and estimable gentlemen.

"There is obviously no need, on the present occasion at least, to extend this catalogue of the political delinquencies of this would-be demagogue, whom we may accordingly leave gibbeted and swinging in the winds of the fool's paradise! an object of derision and contempt to those at least who maintain that integrity of purpose and consistency ought not altogether to be discarded from public life."*

It freezes the blood, in moments of retirement and reflexion, for a man to think that he can have presented a picture so hideous to the view of a fellow-creature!

6. One thing I have not done, and shall not do. I shall not attempt to laugh off the question, or to attenuate its importance. In theory at least, and for others, I am myself a purist, with respect to what touches the consistency of statesmen. Change of opinion, in those to whose judgment the public looks more or less to assist its own, is an evil to the country, although a much smaller evil than their persistence in a course which they know to be wrong. It is not always to be blamed. But it is always to be watched with vigilance; always to be challenged and put upon its trial. The question is one of so much interest, that it may justify a few remarks.

7. It can hardly escape even cursory observation, that the present century has seen a great increase in the instances of what is called political inconsistency. It is

* From a placard just published at Berwick.

needless, and it would be invidious, to refer to names. Among the living, however, who have occupied leading positions, and among the dead of the last twenty years, numerous instances will at once occur to the mind, of men who have been constrained to abandon in middle and mature, or even in advanced life, convictions which they had cherished through long years of conflict and vicissitude: and of men, too, who have not been so fortunate as to close or continue their career in the same political connexion as that in which they commenced it. If we go a little farther back, to the day of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, or even to the day of Mr. Canning, Lord Londonderry, or Lord Liverpool, we must be struck with the difference. A great political and social convulsion, like the French Revolution, of necessity deranged the ranks of party; yet not even then did any man of great name, or of a high order of mind, permanently change his side.

8. If we have witnessed in the last forty years, beginning with the epoch of Roman Catholic Emancipation, a great increase in the changes of party, or of opinion, among prominent men, we are not at once to leap to the conclusion that public character, as a rule, has been either less upright, or even less vigorous. The explanation is rather to be found in this, that the movement of the public mind has been of a nature entirely transcending former experience; and that it has likewise been more promptly and more effectively represented, than at any earlier period, in the action of the Government and the Legislature.

9. If it is the office of law and of institutions to reflect the wants and wishes of the country (and its wishes must ever be a considerable element in its wants), then, as the nation passes from a stationary into a progressive period,

it will justly require that the changes in its own condition and views should be represented in the professions and actions of its leading men. For they exist for its sake, not it for theirs. It remains indeed their business, now and ever, to take honour and duty for their guides, and not the mere demand or purpose of the passing hour; but honour and duty themselves require their loyal servant to take account of the state of facts in which he is to work, and, while ever labouring to elevate the standard of opinion and action around him, to remember that his business is not to construct, with self-chosen materials, an Utopia or a Republic of Plato, but to conduct the affairs of a living and working community of men, who have self-government recognised as in the last resort the moving spring of their political life, and of the institutions which are its outward vesture.

10. The gradual transfer of political power from groups and limited classes to the community, and the constant seething of the public mind, in fermentation upon a vast mass of moral and social, as well as merely political, interests, offer conditions of action, in which it is evident that the statesman, in order to preserve the same amount of consistency as his antecessors in other times, must be gifted with a far larger range of foresight. But Nature has endowed him with no such superiority. It may be true that Sir Robert Peel showed this relative deficiency in foresight, with reference to Roman Catholic Emancipation, to Reform, and to the Corn Law. It does not follow, with respect to many who have escaped the reproach, that they could have stood the trial. For them the barometer was less unsteady; the future less exacting in its demands. But let us suppose that we could secure in our statesmen this enlargement of onward view, this

faculty of measuring and ascertaining to-day the wants of a remote hereafter; we should not even then be at the end of our difficulties. For the public mind is to a great degree unconscious of its own progression; and it would resent and repudiate, if offered to its immature judgment, the very policy, which after a while it will gravely consider, and after another while enthusiastically embrace.

11. Yet, as it still remains true that the actual opinions and professions of men in office, and men in authority without office, are among the main landmarks on which the public has to rely, it may seem that, in vindicating an apparent liberty of change, we destroy the principal guarantees of integrity which are available for the nation at large, and with these all its confidence in the persons who are to manage its affairs. This would be a consequence so fatal, that it might even drive us back upon the hopeless attempt to stereotype the minds of men, and fasten on their manhood the swaddling clothes of their infancy. But such is not the alternative. We may regulate the changes which we cannot forbid, by subjecting them to the test of public scrutiny, and by directing that scrutiny to the enforcement of the laws of moral obligation. There are abundant signs by which to distinguish between those changes, which prove nothing worse than the fallibility of the individual mind, and manœuvres which destroy confidence, and entail merited dishonour. Changes which are sudden and precipitate—changes accompanied with a light and contemptuous repudiation of the former self—changes which are systematically timed and tuned to the interest of personal advancement—changes which are hooded, slurred over, or denied—for these changes, and such as these, I have not

one word to say; and if they can be justly charged upon me, I can no longer desire that any portion, however small, of the concerns or interests of my countrymen should be lodged in my hands.

12. Let me now endeavour to state the offence of which I am held guilty. *Ille ego qui quondam:* I, the person who have now accepted a foremost share of the responsibility of endeavouring to put an end to the existence of the Irish Church as an Establishment, am also the person who, of all men in official, perhaps in public life, did, until the year 1841, recommend, upon the highest and most imperious grounds, its resolute maintenance.

The book entitled 'The State in its Relations with the Church' was printed during the autumn of 1838, while I was making a tour in the South of Europe, which the state of my eyesight at the time had rendered it prudent to undertake. Three editions of it were published without textual change; and in the year 1841 a fourth, greatly enlarged, though in other respects little altered, issued from the press. All interest in it had, however, even at that time, long gone by, and it lived for nearly thirty years only in the vigorous and brilliant, though not (in my opinion) entirely faithful picture, drawn by the accomplished hand of Lord Macaulay. During the present year, as I understand from good authority, it has again been in demand, and in my hearing it has received the emphatic suffrages of many, of whose approval I was never made aware during the earlier and less noisy stages of its existence.

13. The distinctive principle of the book was supposed to be, that the State had a conscience. But the controversy really lies not in the existence of a conscience in

the State, so much as in the extent of its range. Few would deny the obligation of a State to follow the moral law. Every treaty, for example, proceeds upon it. The true issue was this: whether the State, in its best condition, has such a conscience as can take cognisance of religious truth and error, and in particular whether the State of the United Kingdom, at a period somewhat exceeding thirty years ago, was or was not so far in that condition as to be under an obligation to give an active and an exclusive support to the established religion of the country.

The work attempted to survey the actual state of the relations between the State and the Church; to show from History the ground which had been defined for the National Church at the Reformation; and to inquire and determine whether the existing state of things was worth preserving, and defending against encroachment from whatever quarter. This question it decided emphatically in the affirmative.

14. An early copy of the Review containing the powerful essay of Lord Macaulay was sent to me; and I found that to the main proposition, sufficiently startling, of the work itself, the Reviewer had added this assumption, that it contemplated not indeed persecution, but yet the retrogressive process of disabling and disqualifying from civil office all those who did not adhere to the religion of the State. Before (I think) the number of the 'Edinburgh Review' for April 1839 could have been in the hands of the public, I had addressed to Lord (then Mr.) Macaulay the following letter, which I shall make no apology for inserting, inasmuch as it will precede and introduce one more morsel of his writing, for which the public justly shows a keen and insatiable appetite.

"6 CARLTON GARDENS, *April* 10*th*, 1839.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been favoured with a forthcoming number of the 'Edinburgh Review,' and I perhaps too much presume upon the bare acquaintance with you of which alone I can boast, in thus unceremoniously assuming you to be the author of the article entitled 'Church and State,' and in offering you my very warm and cordial thanks for the manner in which you have treated both the work and the author on whom you deigned to bestow your attention. In whatever you write, you can hardly hope for the privilege of most anonymous productions, a real concealment; but if it had been possible not to recognise you, I should have questioned your authorship in this particular case, because the candour and single-mindedness which it exhibits are, in one who has long been connected in the most distinguished manner with political party, so rare as to be almost incredible.

"I hope to derive material benefit, at some more tranquil season, from a consideration of your argument throughout. I am painfully sensible, whenever I have occasion to reopen the book, of its shortcomings, not only of the subject, but even of my own conceptions; and I am led to suspect that, under the influence of most kindly feelings, you have omitted to criticise many things besides the argument, which might fairly have come within your animadversion.

"In the meantime I hope you will allow me to apprise you that on one material point especially I am not so far removed from you as you suppose. I am not conscious that I have said either that the *Test Act** should be repealed, or that it should not have been passed: and though on such subjects language has many bearings which escape the view of the writer at the moment when the pen is in his hand, yet I think that I can hardly have put forth either of these propositions, because I have never entertained the corresponding sentiments. Undoubtedly I should speak of the pure abstract idea of Church and State as implying that they are coextensive: and I should regard the present composition of the State of the United Kingdom as a deviation from that pure idea, but only in the same sense as all differences of religious opinion in the Church are a deviation from its pure idea, while I not only allow that

* [*i.e.* the Act of 1829 for repealing the Test.—W. E. G., 1878.]

they are permitted, but believe that (within limits) they were intended to be permitted. There are some of these deflections from abstract theory which appear to me allowable; and that of the admission of persons not holding the national creed into civil office is one which, in my view, must be determined by times and circumstances. At the same time I do not recede from any protest which I have made against the principle, that religious differences are irrelevant to the question of competency for civil office: but I would take my stand between the opposite extremes, the one that no such differences are to be taken into view, the other that all such differences are to constitute disqualifications.

"I need hardly say the question I raise is not whether you have misrepresented me, for, were I disposed to anything so weak, the whole internal evidence and clear intention of your article would confute me: indeed, I feel I ought to apologise for even supposing that you may have been mistaken in the apprehension of my meaning, and I freely admit on the other hand the possibility that, totally without my own knowledge, my language may have led to such an interpretation.

"In these lacerating times one clings to anything of personal kindness in the past, to husband it for the future, and if you will allow me I shall earnestly desire to carry with me such a recollection of your mode of dealing with the subject; inasmuch as the attainment of truth, we shall agree, so materially depends upon the temper, in which the search for it is instituted and conducted.

"I did not mean to have troubled you at so much length, and I have only to add that I am, with much respect,

"Dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"T. B. Macaulay, Esq." "W. E. Gladstone.

15. To this letter I promptly received the following reply.

"3 Clarges Street, *April 11th*, 1839.

"My dear Sir,

"I have very seldom been more gratified than by the very kind note which I have just received from you. Your book itself, and everything that I heard about you, though almost all my information

came—to the honour, I must say, of our troubled times—from people very strongly opposed to you in politics, led me to regard you with respect and good will, and I am truly glad that I have succeeded in marking those feelings. I was half afraid when I read myself over again in print, that the button, as is too common in controversial fencing, even between friends, had once or twice come off the foil.

"I am very glad to find that we do not differ so widely as I had apprehended about the Test Act. I can easily explain the way in which I was misled. Your general principle is that religious non-conformity ought to be a disqualification for civil office. In page 238 you say that the true and authentic mode of ascertaining conformity is the Act of Communion. I thought, therefore, that your theory pointed directly to a renewal of the Test Act. And I do not recollect that you have ever used any expression importing that your theory ought in practice to be modified by any considerations of civil prudence. All the exceptions that you mention are, as far as I remember, founded on positive contract—not one on expediency, even in cases where the expediency is so strong and so obvious that most statesmen would call it necessity. If I had understood that you meant your rules to be followed out in practice only so far as might be consistent with the peace and good government of society, I should certainly have expressed myself very differently in several parts of my article.

"Accept my warm thanks for your kindness, and believe me, with every good wish,

"My dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"W. E. GLADSTONE, ESQ., M.P." "T. B. MACAULAY.

16. Faithful to logic, and to its theory, my work did not shrink from applying them to the crucial case of the Irish Church. It did not disguise the difficulties of the case, for I was alive to the paradox it involved. But the one master idea of the system, that the State as it then stood was capable in this age, as it had been in ages long gone by, of assuming beneficially a responsibility for the inculcation of a particular religion, carried me through all. My doctrine was, that the Church, as established by

law, was to be maintained for its truth; that this was the only principle on which it could be properly and permanently upheld; that this principle, if good in England, was good also for Ireland; that truth is of all possessions the most precious to the soul of man; and that to remove, as I then erroneously thought we should remove, this priceless treasure from the view and the reach of the Irish people, would be meanly to purchase their momentary favour at the expense of their permanent interests, and would be a high offence against our own sacred obligations.

17. These, I think, were the leading propositions of the work. In one important point, however, it was inconsistent with itself; it contained a full admission that a State might, by its nature and circumstances, be incapacitated from upholding and propagating a definite form of religion.*

"There may be a state of things in the United States of America, perhaps in some British colonies there does actually exist a state of things, in which religious communions are so equally divided, or so variously sub-divided, that the Government is itself similarly chequered in its religious complexion, and thus internally incapacitated by disunion from acting in matters of religion; or, again, there may be a state in which the members of Government may be of one faith or persuasion, the mass of the subjects of another, and hence there may be an external incapacity to act in matters of religion."

18. The book goes on to describe that incapacity, however produced, as a social defect and calamity. But the latter part of the work, instead of acknowledging such incapacity as a sufficient and indeed commanding plea for abstention, went beyond the bounds of moderation, and

* 'The State in its Relations with the Church,' ch. ii. sect. 71, p. 73. Editions 1–3.

treated it as if it must in all cases be a sin; as though any association of men, in civil government or otherwise, could be responsible for acting beyond the line of the capabilities determined for it by its constitution and composition. My meaning I believe was, to describe only cases in which there might be a deliberate renunciation of such duties as there was the power to fulfil. But the line is left too obscurely drawn between this wilful and wanton rejection of opportunities for good, and the cases in which the state of religious convictions, together with the recognised principles of government, disable the civil power from including within its work the business of either directly or indirectly inculcating religion, and mark out for it a different line of action.

19. I believe that the foregoing passages describe fairly, if succinctly, the main propositions of 'The State in its Relations with the Church'; so far as the book bears upon the present controversy. They bound me hand and foot: they hemmed me in on every side. Further on, I shall endeavour to indicate more clearly in what I think the book was right, and in what it was wrong. What I have now to show is the manner in which I retreated from an untenable position. To this retreat, and the time and mode of it, I now draw attention, and I will endeavour to apply to them the tests I have already laid down:—Was it sudden? Was it performed with an indecent levity? Was it made to minister to the interests of political ambition? Was the gravity of the case denied or understated? Was it daringly pretended that there had been no real change of front; and that, if the world had understood me otherwise, it had misunderstood me? My opinion of the Established Church of Ireland now is the direct opposite of what it was then. I then thought it reconcilable

with civil and national justice; I now think the maintenance of it grossly unjust. I then thought its action was favourable to the interests of the religion which it teaches; I now believe it to be opposed to them.

20. But I must venture to point out that, whatever be the sharpness of this contradiction, it is one from which I could not possibly escape by endeavouring to maintain the Established Church of Ireland on the principles on which it is now maintained. I challenge all my censors to impugn me when I affirm that, if the propositions of my work are in conflict (as they are) with an assault upon the existence of the Irish Establishment, they are at least as much, or even more, hostile to the grounds on which it is now attempted to maintain it. At no time of my life did I propound the maxim *simpliciter* that we were to maintain the Establishment. I appeal to the few, who may have examined my work otherwise than for the purpose of culling from it passages which would tell in a quotation. I appeal to the famous article of Lord Macaulay,* who says with truth—

"Mr. Gladstone's whole theory rests on this great fundamental proposition, that the propagation of religious truth is one of the principal ends of government, as government. If Mr. Gladstone has not proved this proposition, *his system vanishes at once.*"

21. This was entirely just. In the protest which I addressed to the distinguished Reviewer on a particular point, I took no exception to it whatever. My work had used (as far as I believe and remember) none of the stock arguments for maintaining the Church of Ireland. I did not say "maintain it, lest you should disturb the settle-

* *Edinburgh Review*, April 1839, p. 235.

ment of property." I did not say "maintain it, lest you should be driven to repeal the Union." I did not say "maintain it, lest you should offend and exasperate the Protestants." I did not say "maintain it, because the body known as the Irish Church has an indefeasible title to its property." I did not say "maintain it for the spiritual benefit of a small minority." Least of all did I say "maintain it, but establish religious equality, by setting up at the public charge other establishments along with it, or by distributing a sop here and a sop there, to coax Roman Catholics and Presbyterians into a sort of acquiescence in its being maintained." These topics I never had made my own. Scarcely ever, in the first efforts of debate, had I referred to one of them. My trumpet, however shrill and feeble, had at least rung out its note clearly. And my ground, right or wrong it matters not for the present purpose, was this: the Church of Ireland must be maintained for the benefit of the whole people of Ireland, and must be maintained as the truth, or it cannot be maintained at all.

22. Accordingly my book contended that the principle of the Grant to Maynooth, unless as a simply covenanted obligation,* and that of the Established Church of Ireland, could not stand together. In the House of Commons, on the question relating to the Grant, I am reported as having said during the Session of 1838,† that I objected to the Grant because it was fatal to the main principle on which the Established Church was founded.

23. And further. The Liberal Government and party

* P. 252.

† 'Mirror of Parliament,' Monday, July 30, 1838. The passage, which is full and clear, is more briefly given, but to the same effect, in 'Hansard,' vol. xliv. p. 817.

of that day proposed, in 1835 and the following years, the famous "Appropriation Clause." The principle of their measure was, that the surplus funds only of the Irish Church were to be applied to popular education, after adequate provision had been made for the spiritual wants of the Protestants. This principle, that adequate provision is to be made for the spiritual wants of the Protestants, before any other claim on the property of the Irish Church can be admitted, was the basis of the Appropriation Clause; and is, as I understand the matter, the very principle which is now maintained against the Liberal party of 1868, by the (so-called) defenders of the Irish Established Church. But this principle I denounced in 1836 as strongly as I could now do. I extract the following passage from a report in 'Hansard,' which, as I remember, I had myself corrected, of a speech on the Irish Tithe Bill with the Appropriation Clause :—*

"A Church Establishment is maintained either for the sake of its members or its doctrines; for those whom it teaches, or for that which it teaches. On the former ground it is not in equity tenable for a moment.

"Why should any preference be given to me over another fellow-subject, or what claim have I personally to have my religion supported, whilst another is disavowed by the State? No claim whatever in respect to myself. I concur entirely with gentlemen opposite, hostile to an Establishment, that no personal privilege ought in such a matter to be allowed.

"But if, on the contrary, I believe, as the great bulk of the British Legislature does believe, that the doctrine and system of the Establishment contain and exhibit truth in its purest and most effective form, and if we also believe truth to be good for the people universally, then we have a distinct and immovable ground for the maintenance of an Establishment; but it follows as a matter of

* June 1, 1836. 'Hansard,' vol. xxxiii. p. 1317.

course from the principle, that it must be maintained, not on a scale exactly and strictly adjusted to the present number of its own members, but on such a scale that it may also have the means of offering to others the benefits which it habitually administers to them.

"Therefore we wish to see the Establishment in Ireland upheld; not for the sake of the Protestants, but of the people at large, that the ministers may be enabled to use the influences of their station of kindly offices and neighbourhood, of the various occasions which the daily intercourse and habits of social life present; aye, and I do not hesitate to add of persuasion itself, applied with a zeal tempered by knowledge and discretion, in the propagation of that which is true, and which, being true, is good as well for those who as yet have it not, as well for those who have it. It is the proposition of the noble Lord which is really open to the charge of bigotry, intolerance, and arbitrary selection; because, disavowing the maintenance and extension of truth, he continues by way of personal privilege to the Protestants the legal recognition of their Church, which he refuses to the Church of the Roman Catholic."

24. The negative part of this passage I adopt, except the censure it implies upon Earl Russell and his friends; who, whether their actual propositions were defensible or not, had the "root of the matter" in their hearts, and were far ahead of me in their political forethought, and in their desire to hold up at least the banner of a generous and a hopeful policy towards Ireland.

25. In this manner I prove that, while I was bound by the propositions of my work, I was not singly but doubly bound. I was bound to defend the Irish Church, as long as it could be defended on the ground of its truth. But when the day arrived on which that ground was definitively abandoned, on which a policy was to be adopted by the Imperial Parliament such as to destroy this plea for the Irish Establishment, I was equally bound in such case to adopt no other: I had shown that justice would fail to

warrant the mere support of the Church of the minority; I was held, therefore, not to construct out of rags and tatters, shreds and patches, a new and different case for maintaining it on the ground of favour, or, as it is termed, justice, to Protestants; and, if I had done anything of this kind, I should not have escaped the responsibility of inconsistency, but should simply have added a second and (as I think) a less excusable inconsistency to the first.

26. The day for the adoption of such a policy, as I have described, was not far distant.

Scarcely had my work issued from the press when I became aware that there was no party, no section of a party, no individual person probably in the House of Commons, who was prepared to act upon it. I found myself the last man on the sinking ship. Exclusive support to the established religion of the country, with a limited and local exception for Scotland under the Treaty of Union with that country, had been up to that time the actual rule of our policy; the instances to the contrary being of equivocal construction, and of infinitesimal amount. But the attempt to give this rule a vitality, other than that of sufferance, was an anachronism in time and in place. When I bid it live, it was just about to die. It was really a quickened, and not a deadened, conscience in the country, which insisted on enlarging the circle of State support, even while it tended to restrain the range of political interference in religion. The condition of our poor, of our criminals, of our military and naval services, and the backward state of popular education, forced on us a group of questions, before the moral pressure of which the old rules properly gave way. At and about the same period, new attempts to obtain grants of public money for the building of churches in England

and Scotland, I am thankful to say, failed. The powerful Government of 1843 also failed to carry a measure of Factory Education, because of the preference it was thought to give to the Established Church. I believe the very first opinion, which I ever was called upon to give in Cabinet, was an opinion in favour of the withdrawal of that measure.

27. Such being the state of facts and feelings, it was impossible, notwithstanding the strength of anti-Roman opinion, that Ireland should not assert her share, and that a large one, to consideration in these critical matters. The forces, which were now at work, brought speedily to the front and to the top that question of Maynooth College, which I had always (rightly or wrongly) treated as a testing question for the foundations of the Irish Established Church; as, in point of principle, the *Articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiæ.*

28. In the course of the year 1844, when I was a member of the Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel, he made known to me his opinion that it was desirable to remodel and to increase the Grant to Maynooth. I was the youngest member of that Government, entirely bound up with it in policy, and warmly attached, by respect and even affection, to its head and to some of its leading members. Of association with what was termed ultra-Toryism, in general politics, I had never dreamed. I well knew that the words of Sir R. Peel were not merely tentative; but that, as it was right they should, they indicated a fixed intention. The choice before me, therefore, was, to support his measure, or to retire from his Government into a position of complete isolation, and what was more than this, subject to a grave and general imputation of political eccentricity. My retirement, I knew, could

have no other warrant than this: that it would be a tribute to those laws which, as I have urged, must be upheld for the restraint of changes of opinion and conduct in public men.

29. For I never entertained the idea of opposing the measure of Sir Robert Peel. I can scarcely be guilty of a breach of confidence when I mention that Lord Derby, to whom I had already been indebted for much personal kindness, was one of those colleagues who sought to dissuade me from resigning my office. He urged upon me that such an act must be followed by resistance to the measure of the Government, and that I should run the risk of being mixed with a fierce religious agitation.* I replied that I must adhere to my purpose of retirement, but that I did not perceive the necessity of its being followed by resistance to the proposal. Overtures were, not unnaturally, made to me by some of those who resisted it; but they were at once declined. My whole purpose was, to place myself in a position in which I should be free to consider my course without being liable to any just suspicion on the ground of personal interest.

30. It is not profane, if I now say "with a great price obtained I this freedom." The political association in which I stood was to me at the time the *alpha* and

* [When Lord Derby resigned, and I accepted, the Seals of the Colonial Office in December 1845, he mentioned to me, not confidentially, that while he disapproved of the decision of the Cabinet to propose the repeal of the Corn Law, he meant to promote the passing of the measure. I reminded him of the argument which he had pressed upon me twelve months before. We shall probably, at some future time, have an authentic account of the facts and motives which led Lord Derby to alter his intention, and to become the leader of an opposition founded on the principle of Protection. The change cast no stain upon his honour, but it was a public calamity.—W. E. G., 1878.]

omega of public life. The Government of Sir Robert Peel was believed to be of immovable strength. My place, as President of the Board of Trade, was at the very kernel of its most interesting operations; * for it was in progress, from year to year, with continually waxing courage, towards the emancipation of industry, and therein towards the accomplishment of another great and blessed work of public justice. Giving up what I highly prized; aware that

"malè sarta
Gratia nequicquam coit, et rescinditur;"†

I felt myself open to the charge of being opinionated, and wanting in deference to really great authorities; and I could not but know that I should inevitably be regarded as fastidious and fanciful, fitter for a dreamer, or possibly a schoolman, than for the active purposes of public life in a busy and moving age.

31. In effect, so it was. In the month of January 1845, if not sooner, the resolution of the Cabinet was taken; and I resigned. The public judgment, as might have been expected, did not favour the act. I remember that the *Daily News*, then as now a journal greatly distinguished for an almost uniform impartiality, as well as for breadth of view and high discernment, remarked at the time, or shortly afterwards, upon the case, as a rare one, in which a public man had injured himself with the public by an act which must in fairness be taken to be an

* [The Board of Trade, at that period, while subject to the control of the Treasury, was the originating department of commercial changes; and before quitting my office, I had prepared for the Government the second "New Tariff" of this country. The first was in 1842; the second became law in 1845; the third in 1860.—W. E. G., 1878.]

† Hor. Ep. ii. 3. 31.

act of self-denial. I hope that reference to this criticism will not be considered boastful. It can hardly be so; for an infirm judgment, exhibited in a practical indiscretion, is after all the theme of these pages. I do not claim acquittal upon any one of the counts of such an indictment as, I have admitted, may be brought against the conduct I pursued. One point only I plead, and plead with confidence. Such conduct proved that I was sensible of the gravity of any great change in political conduct or opinion, and desirous beyond all things of giving to the country the only guarantees that could be given of my integrity, even at the expense of my judgment and fitness for affairs. If any man doubts this, I ask him to ask himself, what demand political honour could have made, with which I failed to comply?

32. In the ensuing debate on the Address (February 4, 1845), Lord John Russell, in terms of courtesy and kindness which I had little deserved from him, called for an explanation of the cause of my retirement. In a statement, the report of which I corrected for 'Hansard's Debates,' I replied that it had reference to the intentions of the Government with respect to Maynooth; that those intentions pointed to a measure "at variance with the system which I had maintained," "in a form the most detailed and deliberate," "in a published treatise": that although I had never set forth any theory of political affairs as "under all circumstances inflexible and immutable," yet I thought those who had borne such solemn testimony to a particular view of a great constitutional question, "ought not to be parties responsible for proposals which involved a material departure from it." And the purpose of my retirement was to "place myself, so far as in me lay, in a position to form not only an

honest, but likewise an independent and an unsuspected judgment," on the plan likely to be submitted by the Government. I also spoke as follows, in more forms than one:

"I wish again and most distinctly to state, that I am not prepared to take part in any religious warfare against that measure, such as I believe it may be; or to draw a distinction between the Roman Catholics and other denominations of Christians, with reference to the religious opinions which each of them respectively may hold."

Now I respectfully submit that by this act my freedom was established; and that it has never since, during a period of nearly five-and-twenty years, been compromised.

33. Some may say, that it is perfectly consistent to have endowed Maynooth anew, and yet to uphold on principle, as a part of the Constitution, the Established Church of Ireland. It may be consistent, for them; it was not consistent, as I have distinctly shown, for me. The moment that I admitted the validity of a claim by the Church of Rome for the gift, by the free act of the Imperial Parliament, of new funds for the education of its clergy, the true basis of the Established Church of Ireland for me was cut away. The one had always been treated by me as exclusive of the other. It is not now the question whether this way of looking at the question was a correct one. There are great authorities against it; while it seems at the same time to have some considerable hold on what may be termed the moral sense of portions, perhaps large portions, of the people. The present question is one of fact. It is enough for the present purpose, that such was my view.

34. From that day forward, I have never to my knowledge said one word, in public or in private, which could pledge me on principle to the maintenance of the Irish

Church. Nay, in a speech, delivered on the second reading of the Maynooth College Bill, I took occasion distinctly to convey, that the application of religious considerations to ecclesiastical questions in Ireland would be entirely altered by the passing of the measure:—

"The boon, to which I for one have thus agreed, is a very great boon. I think it important, most of all important with regard to the principles it involves. I am very far, indeed, from saying that it virtually decides upon the payment of the Roman Catholic priests of Ireland by the State; but I do not deny that it disposes of the religious objections to that measure. I mean that we, who assent to this Bill, shall in my judgment no longer be in a condition to plead religious objections to such a project."*

35. True, I did not say that I was thenceforward prepared at any moment to vote for the removal of the Established Church in Ireland. And this for the best of all reasons: it would not have been true. It is one thing to lift the anchor; it is another to spread the sails. It may be a duty to be in readiness for departure, when departure itself would be an offence against public prudence and public principle. But I do not go so far even as this. On the contrary, I was willing and desirous† that it should be permitted to continue. If its ground in logic was gone, yet it might have, in fact, like much besides, its day of grace. I do not now say that I leapt at once to the conclusion that the Established Church of Ireland must at any definite period "cease to exist as an Establishment." She had my sincere good will; I was not sorry, I was glad, that while Ireland seemed content to have it so, a longer time should be granted her to

* 'Speech on the Second Reading of the Maynooth College Bill,' 1845, p. 44. † *Ibid.* p. 33.

unfold her religious energies through the medium of an active and pious clergy, which until this our day she had never possessed. My mind recoiled then, as it recoils now, from the idea of worrying the Irish Church to death. I desired that it should remain even as it was, until the way should be opened, and the means at hand, for bringing about some better state of things.

36. Moreover, it was a duty, from my point of view, completely to exhaust every chance on behalf of the Irish Church. I have not been disposed, at any time of life, gratuitously to undertake agitation of the most difficult, and at times apparently the most hopeless questions. At the period of the Appropriation Clause, I represented to myself, and I believe to others, that the true power of the Church as a religious engine had never up to that period been fairly tried. In name a religious institution, her influences, her benefices, her sees, were commonly employed for purposes, which we must condemn as secular, even if they had not been utterly anti-national. Only within a few, a very few years, had her clergy even begun to bestir themselves; and they had forthwith found that, from the unsettled state of the law of tithe, they were in the midst of an agitation, both menacing to public order, and even perilous to life. I was desirous to see what, after person and property should have been rendered secure, and a peaceful atmosphere restored, a generation of pious and zealous men could accomplish in their actual position. I am still of the opinion that thirty-five years ago the religion of the Irish Church had not—to her and to our shame be it spoken—had fair play.

37. From the days of Elizabeth downwards, with the rarest exceptions, the worldly element had entirely outweighed the religious one (whatever the intention may

have been) in the actual working of the ecclesiastical institutions of Ireland. Mr. Burke has immortalised the burning shame, and the hideous scandals, of those penal laws which, perhaps for the first time in the history of Christendom if not of man, aimed at persecuting men out of one religion, but not at persecuting them into another. I will not be so rash as to enter on the field,

"Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus."

38. But the time of awakening had at last come. The Irish Church had grown conscious that she, too, had a Gospel to declare. Even with my present opinions I might feel a scruple as to the measures now proposed, but for the resistless and accumulated proof of impotence afforded by the experience of my lifetime, and due, I believe, to a radically false position. For the Irish Church has, since the tithe war of 1830–2 came to an end, had not only fair play—that is such fair play as in Ireland the Establishment allows to the Church—but fair play and something more. She has enjoyed an opportunity, extending over a generation of men, with circumstances of favour such as can hardly be expected to recur.

39. What has been her case? She has had ample endowments; perfect security; an almost unbroken freedom from the internal controversies which have chastened (though, in chastening, I believe improved) the Church of England. The knowledge of the Irish language has been extensively attained by her clergy.* She has had all the moral support that could be given her by the people of this country; for it was the people, and not a mere party, who, in 1835–8, repudiated and repelled the Appropriation

* See 'Life of Archbishop Whately,' vol. ii. p. 49.

Clause. Her rival, the Church of Rome, has seen its people borne down to the ground by famine; and then thinned from year to year, in hundreds of thousands, by the resistless force of emigration. And, last and most of all, in the midst of that awful visitation of 1847–8, her Protestant Clergy came to the Roman Catholic people clad in the garb of angels of light; for besides their own bounty (most liberal, I believe, in proportion to their means), they became the grand almoners of the British nation. When, after all this, we arrive at a new census of religion in 1861, we find that only the faintest impression has been made upon the relative numbers of the two bodies; an impression much slighter, I apprehend, than would have been due to the comparative immunity of the Established Church from the mere drain of emigration; and, if so, representing in reality, not a gain, but a virtual loss of some part of the narrow ground, which had before been occupied by the favoured religion of the State.

40. Like others, I have watched with interest the results of those missionary operations in the West of Ireland, which have, perhaps, been construed as of a greater ulterior significance than really belongs to them. They were, I understand, due not so much to the Established Church, as to religious bodies in this country, which expend large funds in Ireland for the purpose of making converts: an operation, in which the Presbyterians and Protestant Dissenters lend their aid. Let it not be undervalued. But I, for one, recollect that this is not the first time, when local and occasional inroads have been successfully effected by Protestants upon the serried phalanx of the Roman Church in Ireland, and have been mistaken for signs of permanent or a general conquest. More than forty years ago, Bishop Blomfield—

no mean authority—prophesied or announced, in the House of Lords, that a second Reformation had then begun. And there had indeed taken place in Ireland at that time one,* if not more than one, instance of conversions on a large scale to the Established Church, such as was well calculated to excite sanguine anticipations, though they may have been dispelled by subsequent experience.

41. I think we ought now to perceive that the annexation of the warrant of civil authority to the religious embassy of the Irish Church, discredits, in lieu of recommending, it in the view of the Irish people. I do not mean that we are to put down the Establishment for the sake of a more effective propagandism. We must not for a moment forget that civil justice, an adaptation of the state of things in Ireland to the essential principles of political right, is that one broad and more than sufficient justification of the measure, in which all its advocates agree. But, over and above this, they may also agree in reflecting with satisfaction that the time is about to come when in Ireland, in lieu of a system which insults the religion of the majority, and makes that of the minority powerless, creeds will compete upon the level, and will thrive according to their merits. Nor will they be offended with one another when, in the anticipation of such a state of things, each man who has faith in freedom, faith in justice, faith in truth, anticipates a harvest of benefit for his own.

42. The emancipation thus effected from the net in which I had been bound was soon after tested. In 1846, it was suggested to me that I should oppose a member of the newly-formed Government of Lord John Russell. In

* Details are given in Forster's 'Life of Bishop Tebb.'

my reply, declining the proposal, I wrote thus to the late Duke of Newcastle: "As to the Irish Church, I am not able to go to war with them on the ground that they will not pledge themselves to the maintenance of the existing appropriation of Church property in Ireland." This, however, was a private proceeding.

43. But, early in 1847, Mr. Estcourt announced his resignation of the seat he had held, amidst universal respect, for the University of Oxford. The partiality of friends proposed me as a candidate. The representation of that University was, I think, stated by Mr. Canning to be to him the most coveted prize of political life. I am not ashamed to own that I desired it with an almost passionate fondness. For besides all the associations it maintained and revived, it was in those days an honour not only given without solicitation, but, when once given, not withdrawn.* The contest was conducted with much activity, and some heat. I was, naturally enough, challenged as to my opinions on the Established Church of Ireland. My friend Mr. Coleridge, then young, but already distinguished, was one of my most active and able supporters. He has borne spontaneous testimony, within the last few weeks, to the manner in which the challenge was met:—

"Gentlemen, I must be permitted—because an attack has been made upon Mr. Gladstone, and it has been suggested that his conversion to his present principles is recent—to mention what is within my own knowledge and experience with regard to him. In 1847, when I was just leaving Oxford, I had the great honour of being secretary to his first election committee for that university, and I well recollect how, upon that occasion, some older and more

* The case of Sir R. Peel, in 1829, I do not consider an exception to this remark, as he gave back the charge into the hands of the electors.

moderate supporters were extremely anxious to draw from him some pledge that he should stand by the Irish Church. He distinctly refused to pledge himself to anything of the kind."*

44. The next Parliamentary occasion, after the Maynooth Grant, which brought prominently into view the ecclesiastical arrangements of Ireland, was that of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill in 1851. I felt bound, as one of a very small minority, but in cordial agreement with the chief surviving associates of Sir Robert Peel, to offer all the opposition in my power, not only to the clauses by which the party then called Protectionist, and now Tory, Conservative, or Constitutionalist, endeavoured to sharpen the sting of the measure, but to the substance of the measure itself. I may be permitted to observe, that for the representative of the University of Oxford thus to set himself against the great bulk of the Liberal as well as the Conservative party, whatever else it may have been, was not a servile or a self-seeking course. But this is irrelevant. It is more to the present purpose to observe that, in resisting this measure, I did not attempt to mitigate the offence by any profession of adhesion in principle to the maintenance of the Established Church of Ireland; but I spoke as follows:

"We cannot change the profound and resistless tendencies of the age towards religious liberty. It is our business to guide and control their application. Do this you may. But to endeavour to turn them backwards is the sport of children, done by the hands of men; and every effort you may make in that direction will recoil upon you in disaster and disgrace."†

45. The years flowed on. From 1846 forwards, the

* Mr. (now Lord) Coleridge's speech at Exeter, August 1868. From the *Manchester Examiner* of August 22.

† 'Corrected Speech on the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill,' 1851, p. 28.

controversy of Free Trade was, as a rule, the commanding and absorbing controversy, the pole of political affairs. But from time to time motions were made in relation to the Established Church of Ireland. That question remained as one asleep, but whose sleep is haunted with uneasy dreams. These motions were, as far as I remember them, uniformly of a narrow and partial character. They aimed at what is called getting in the thin end of the wedge. All honour, however, to each one of those who made them. The mover of any such proposal was *vox clamantis in deserto*. The people of England had, in 1835–8, settled the matter for the time. The reproaches now made against the older leaders and the body of the Liberal party for not having seriously entered the struggle, appear to me to be not only unjust but even preposterous. The Legislature had other great subjects to deal with, besides the Irish Church. Four years of deadly conflict on such a matter might well be followed by five times four years of repose, well filled with other public effort and achievement. But in the meantime individuals, by their partial and occasional efforts, bore witness to a principle broader than any which they formally announced. That principle—the application of a true religious equality to Ireland—was biding its time.

46. No one, in my opinion, was bound to assert, by speech or vote, any decisive opinion upon so great and formidable a question until he should think, upon a careful survey of the ground and the time, of the assisting and opposing forces, that the season for action had come. The motions actually made were commonly motions for inquiry, or motions aimed generally at a change. I did not enter into the debates. For me, the subject wanted no elucidation. When I voted, I voted against them;

and against such motions, if they were made, I should vote again.

47. I now arrive at the Government of 1859–65. He who has slept long is likely soon to wake. After the Free Trade struggles of 1860 and 1861 were over, even so it was, I thought, with the question of the Irish Church. There was a complete lull in political affairs. They hung, in a great degree, upon a single life—the remarkable life of Lord Palmerston. It was surely right to think a little of the future. The calm was certain to be succeeded by a breeze, if not a gale. It was too plain to me that the inner disposition of Ireland, relatively to this country, was not improving; and that, in the course of years, more or fewer, the question of the Irish Church was certain to revive, and, if it should revive, probably to be carried to a final issue. My first thought, under these circumstances, was about my constituents. Anxiously occupied in other matters, I did not give my nights and days to the question of the Irish Church. Yet the question continually flitted, as it were, before me; and I felt that, before that question arose in a practical shape, my relation to the University should be considered, and its Convocation distinctly apprised that at the proper time it would be my duty to support very extensive changes in the Irish Church.

48. My valued friend, Sir R. Palmer, has done me the favour, of his own motion, to state in public that I then apprised him of my state of mind:

"There had been people who had said, 'You would never have heard anything about the Irish Church question from Mr. Gladstone if the Tories had not been in power, and he had not wanted to get their place.' (Hear, hear.) To his certain knowledge that was not true. He could mention what had taken place between Mr. Glad-

stone and himself, and he did so the rather because it did justice to him, and would show them that his own mind had been particularly addressed to that subject, to which he had paid some degree of attention some years before the present time. In the year 1863, at a time when no one was bringing forward this question, or seemed very likely to do so, Mr. Gladstone had told him privately that he had made up his mind on the subject, and that he should not be able to keep himself from giving public expression to his feelings. How far or near that might be practicable, he could not foresee; but, under the circumstances, he wanted his friends connected with the University of Oxford to consider whether or not they would desire for that reason a change in the representation of the University."*

49. Partly because I felt that this question might come to the front, and partly because I saw a manifest determination in a portion of the Academical constituency to press my friends with incessant contests, of which I was unwilling to be the hero, I was not indisposed to retire without compulsion from the seat, if it could have been done without obvious detriment to the principles on which I had been returned. This was judged to be uncertain. Consequently, I remained. But in 1865, on the motion of Mr. Dillwyn,† I made a speech, in which I declared that present action was impossible; that, at any period, immense difficulties would have to be encountered; but that this was "the question of the future." I stated strongly, though summarily, some of the arguments against the Church as it stood. I entirely abstained from advising or glancing at the subject of mere reform, and I did not use one word from which it could be inferred that I desired the Church to continue in its place as the National or Established Church of the country.

* Sir R. Palmer's speech at Richmond, August 1868. From the *Manchester Examiner* of August 24.

† Mr. Dillwyn moved that the state of the Irish Church was "unsatisfactory, and called for the early attention of the Government."

50. My speech was immediately denounced by Mr. (now Chief Justice) Whiteside, as one intended to be fatal to the Established Church of Ireland when an opportunity should arise;* and I am told that my opponents in the University circulated my speech among their portion of the constituency (as I think they were quite justified in doing) to my prejudice. My friends, however, stood by me, and resolved to contend for the seat. An application was made to me by a distinguished scholar, divine, and teacher, the Warden of Trinity College, Glenalmond, to give certain explanations for the appeasing of doubts. I did so in the following letter:

"11 CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE, S.W.,
"*June* 8, 1865.

"DEAR DR. HANNAH,

"It would be very difficult for me to subscribe to *any* interpretation of my speech on the Irish Church like that of your correspondent, which contains so many conditions and bases of a plan for dealing with a question apparently remote, and at the same time full of difficulties on every side. My reasons are, I think, plain. First, because the question is remote, and apparently out of all bearing on the practical politics of the day, I think it would be for me worse than superfluous to determine upon any scheme or basis of a scheme with respect to it. Secondly, because it is difficult, even if I anticipated any likelihood of being called upon to deal with it, I should think it right to make no decision beforehand on the mode of dealing with the difficulties. But the first reason is that which chiefly weighs. As far as I know, my speech signifies pretty clearly the broad distinction which I take between the abstract and the practical views of the subject. And I think I have stated strongly my sense of the responsibility attaching to the

* 'Hansard,' vol. clxxviii. p. 444.—"But I do complain of a Minister who, himself the author of a book in defence of Church and State, when one branch of the Christian Church is attacked and in danger, delivers a speech, every word of which is hostile to its existence when the right time comes for attacking it."

opening of such a question, except in a state of things which gave promise of satisfactorily closing it. For this reason it is that I have been so silent about the matter, and may probably be so again; but I could not as a Minister, and as member for Oxford, allow it to be debated an indefinite number of times and remain silent. One thing, however, I may add, because I think it a clear landmark. In any measure dealing with the Irish Church, I think (though I scarcely *expect* ever to be called on to share in such a measure) the Act of Union must be recognised and must have important consequences, especially with reference to the position of the hierarchy.

"I am much obliged to you for writing, and I hope you will see and approve my reasons for not wishing to carry my *own mind* further into a question lying at a distance I cannot measure.

"Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "W. E. GLADSTONE.

"Rev. the WARDEN, Trin. Coll., Perth."

51. The letter has been the object of much criticism upon these three grounds. First, it contained a statement that the Act of Union ought to entail important consequences in the formation of any measure relating to the Irish Church. Secondly, that the question was hardly within the domain of practical politics. Thirdly, that I felt very uncertain whether it would be dealt with in my time. The explanation of the first is as follows:—In contemplating the subject of the Irish Church, I did not see how to give full effect to the principle of religious equality without touching the composition of the House of Lords. In this strait, my personal opinion was that it would be best to retain (though in an altered form) the Episcopal element from Ireland in the House of Lords, lest its withdrawal should lead to other changes, of a kind to weaken the constitution of that important branch of the legislature; and thus far I was disposed to abridge the application of religious equality to Ireland. I had

not yet examined the question so closely as to perceive that this mode of proceeding was wholly impracticable, and that the inconvenience of removing the Irish Bishops must be faced. And for my part I have not been so happy, at any time of my life, as to be able sufficiently to adjust the proper conditions of handling any difficult question, until the question itself was at the door. This retention of the Bishops in the House of Peers was the important consequence that I thought the Act of Union would draw.

52. Among those errors of the day which may be called singular as vulgar errors, is that which supposes the fifth Article of the Act of Union with Ireland to refer to the endowments of the Church. Its terms touch exclusively her "doctrine, worship, discipline, and government." There is no violation of this section of the Act of Union in withdrawing her endowments, were she stripped of every shilling. But it may be said that her "government," as distinguished from her discipline, perhaps involves the position of her exclusive relation to the State. So I thought; and accordingly thus I wrote to Dr. Hannah.

53. The second proposition of the letter was not only in harmony with my speech, it was simply the condensation of the speech into a brief form of words. For, agreeing with Mr. Dillwyn as to the merits of the case, I held, as I have ever held, that it is not the duty of a Minister to be forward in inscribing on the Journals of Parliament his own abstract views; or to disturb the existence of a great institution like the Church of Ireland, until he conceives the time to be come when he can probably give practical effect to his opinions. Because the question was not within the range of the practical politics

"of the day," agreeing with his sentiment, I voted against his motion.

54. But, forsooth, it is a matter of wonder that I should have felt doubtful whether the Irish Church would be dealt with in my time. Now, I do not complain of this. It is an example of what is continually happening in human affairs, of the mythical handling of facts, of the reflection of the ideas, feelings, and circumstances of one period upon the events of another, and thus dressing the past in the garb of the present. I abide by this, and by every word of the letter. The question of the Irish Church was in my view, in the year 1865, what, be it remembered, the question of Parliamentary Reform seemed to be in the first moiety of the year 1830—namely, a remote question. Had any man said to me, "How soon will it come on?" I should have replied, "Heaven knows; perhaps it will be five years, perhaps it will be ten." My duty was to let my constituents know the state of my mind on a matter so important, because the wind was gradually veering to that quarter, even though I might not believe, and did not believe it to be the most probable event, that it would reach the point for action during the life of the Parliament just then about to be elected.

55. But then I also referred to my own political life-time. On that subject I will only say that a man who, in 1865, completed his thirty-third year of a laborious career, who had already followed to the grave the remains of almost all the friends abreast of whom he had started from the University in the career of public life; and who had observed that, excepting two recent cases, it was hard to find in our whole history a single man who had been permitted to reach the fortieth year of a course of labour

similar to his own within the walls of the House of Commons; such a man might surely be excused if he did not venture to reckon for himself on an exemption from the lot of greater and better men, and if he formed a less sanguine estimate of the fraction of space yet remaining to him, than seems to have been the case with his critics.

56. The reasons that, in my judgment, prove the time now to have arrived for dealing decisively with the question of the Irish Church Establishment, must be treated elsewhere than in these pages.

So far as Ireland and the immediate controversy, and my personal vindication, are concerned, I have done. But there is matter of wider interest, which connects itself with the subject. The change of conduct, the shifting of the mind of an individual, shrink into insignificance by the side of the question, What has been, since 1838, the direction of the public sentiment, the course of law and administration, the general march of affairs?

57. I have described the erroneous impressions as to the actual and prospective state of things, under which was urged the practical application of the system of thought embodied in my work of 1838. It may be said, that my error was a gross, or even an absurd, error. On that question I need not enter. But I will endeavour to bring into view some circumstances relating to the time, which may help to account for it. And here I feel that I pass beyond the narrower and more personal scope of these pages, if I attempt to recall some of the changes that have taken place during the last thirty or five-and-thirty years, in matters which bear upon the religious character and relations of the State.

58. At that time, Jews, and others not adopting the Christian name, were excluded from civil office; and though

Roman Catholics and Nonconformists had effected an entrance into Parliament, there still remained an oath for the former, and a declaration for the latter, which, if they did not practically limit freedom, yet denoted, like the mark of chains on the limbs of an emancipated slave, that there had been a time when it did not exist. The Establishment of Scotland was still entire, and animated principally with the strength of the eminent men, who afterwards led the Free-Church Secession. The attack on the Irish Church, pushed in 1835 with earnestness and vigour by the Liberal party, had speedily proved to be hopeless. The State continued to make to other persuasions certain grants, little more than compassionate, and handed down from other times; but, even in the case of the classes especially in its charge, such as soldiers and sailors, or such again as paupers and criminals, it rarely permitted, and still more rarely provided for them, the means of religious worship according to their own religious convictions.

59. In the great province of popular education in England, nothing was granted except to schools of the Church, or to schools in which, while the Bible was read, no religion other than that of the Church was taught; and he would have been deemed something more than a daring prophet, who should have foretold that in a few years the utmost ambition of the lay champions, and of the spiritual heads of the Church, would be to obtain the maintenance of a denominational system in popular education, under which all religions alike should receive the indirect, yet not unsubstantial, countenance of the State.

60. But the most important of all the changes which have taken place within the interval, has been the change in the condition of the Church of England itself.

Even for those old enough to have an adequate recollection of the facts, it requires no inconsiderable mental effort to travel backwards over the distractions, controversies, perils, and calamities of the last thirty years, to the period immediately before those years; and to realise not only the state of facts, but especially the promises and prospects which it presented. I am well aware that any description of it which may now be attempted will appear to bear more or less the colour of romance; but, without taking it into view, no one can either measure the ground over which we have travelled, or perceive how strong was then the temptation to form an over-sanguine estimate of the probable progress of the Church in her warfare with sin and ignorance, and even in persuading seceders of all kinds to re-enter her fold.

61. That time was a time such as comes, after sickness, to a man in the flower of life, with an unimpaired and buoyant constitution; the time in which, though health is as yet incomplete, the sense and the joy of health are keener, as the fresh and living current first flows in, than are conveyed by its even and undisturbed possession.

The Church of England had been passing through a long period of deep and chronic religious lethargy. For many years, perhaps for some generations, Christendom might have been challenged to show, either then or from any former age, a clergy (with exceptions) so secular and lax, or congregations so cold, irreverent, and indevout. The process of awakening had, indeed, begun many years before; but a very long time is required to stir up effectually a torpid body, whose dimensions overspread a great country. Active piety and zeal among the clergy, and yet more among the laity, had been in a great degree confined within the narrow limits of a party, which, however

meritorious in its work, presented in the main phenomena of transition, and laid but little hold on the higher intellect and cultivation of the country.

62. Our churches and our worship bore in general too conclusive testimony to a frozen indifference. No effort had been made either to overtake the religious destitution of the multitudes at home, or to follow the numerous children of the Church, migrating into distant lands, with any due provision for their spiritual wants. The richer benefices were very commonly regarded as a suitable provision for such members of the higher families, as were least fit to push their way in any profession requiring thought or labour. The abuses of plurality and non-residence were at a height, which, if not proved by statistical returns, it would now be scarcely possible to believe. At Eton, the greatest public school of the country (and I presume it may be taken as a sample of the rest), the actual teaching of Christianity was all but dead, though happily none of its forms had been surrendered. It is a retrospect full of gloom; and with all our Romanising, and all our Rationalising, what man of sense would wish to go back upon those dreary times:

"Domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna"?*

63. But between 1831 and 1840, the transformation, which had previously begun, made a progress altogether marvellous. Much was due, without doubt, to the earnest labour of individuals. Such men as Bishop Blomfield on the Bench, and Dr. Hook in the parish (and I name them only as illustrious examples), who had long been toiling with a patient but a dauntless energy, began as it were to get the upper hand. But causes of deep and general

* Æn. vi.

operation were also widely at work. As the French Revolution had done much to renovate Christian belief on the Continent, so the Church of England was less violently, but pretty sharply, roused by the political events which arrived in a quick and rattling succession. In 1828, the repeal of the Test Act. In 1829, the emancipation of the Roman Catholics. In 1831–2, the agony, and triumph, of Reform. In 1833, the Church Temporalities Act for Ireland. There was now a general uprising of religious energy in the Church throughout the land. It saved the Church. Her condition before 1830 could not possibly have borne the scrutinising eye, which for thirty years past has been turned upon our institutions. Her rank corruptions must have called down the avenging arm. But it was arrested just in time.

64. It would be difficult to give a just and full idea of the beneficial changes which were either accomplished or begun during this notable decade of years. They embraced alike formal, official movements, of a nature to strike the general eye, and those local improvements in detail, which, as single changes, are known only in each neighbourhood, but which unitedly transform the face of a country. Laws were passed to repress gross abuses; and the altering spirit of the clergy seconded, and even outstripped, the laws. The outward face of divine worship began to be renovated, and the shameful condition of the sacred fabrics was rapidly amended, with such a tide of public approval as overflowed all the barriers of party and of sect, and speedily found its manifestations even in the seceding communions. There is no reason to doubt that at that time at least, and before such changes had become too decidedly the fashion, the outward embellishment of churches, and the greater decency and order of services,

answered to, and sprang from, a call within, and proved a less unworthy conception of the sublime idea of Christian worship.

65. The missionary arm of the Church began to exhibit a vigour wholly unknown to former years. Noble efforts were made, under the auspices of the chief bishops of the Church, to provide for the unsatisfied spiritual wants of the metropolis. The great scheme of the Colonial Episcopate was founded; and in its outset, led to such a development of apostolic zeal and self-denial, as could not but assist, by a powerful reaction, the domestic progress. The tone of public schools (on one of which Arnold was now spending his noble energies) and of universities, was steadily yet rapidly raised.

66. The greatest change of all was within the body of the clergy.* A devoted piety, and an unworldly life, which had been the rare exceptions, became visibly from year to year more and more the rule. The spectacle, as a whole, was like that we are told of a Russian spring: when, after long months of rigid cold, almost in a day the snow dissolves, the ice breaks up and is borne away, and the whole earth is covered with a rush of verdure. These were bright and happy days for the Church of England. She seemed, or seemed to seem, as a Church recalling the description of Holy Writ; to be "beautiful as the sun which goeth forth in his might,"† "and terrible as an army with banners."‡

* It was, I think, about the year 1835, that I first met the Rev. Sydney Smith, at the house of Mr. Hallam. In conversation after dinner he said to me, with the double charm of humour and of good-humour, "The improvement of the clergy in my time has been astonishing. Whenever you meet a clergyman of my age, you may be quite sure that he is a bad clergyman."

† Judges v. 31. ‡ Canticles vi. 4.

67. Of this great renovating movement, a large part centred in Oxford. At the time, indeed, when I resided there, from 1828 to 1831, no sign of it had yet appeared. A steady, clear, but dry Anglican orthodoxy bore sway; and frowned, this way or that, on the first indication of any tendency to diverge from the beaten path. Dr. Pusey was, at that time, revered, indeed, for his piety and charity, no less than admired for his learning and talents, but suspected (I believe) of sympathy with the German theology, in which he was known to be profoundly versed. Dr. Newman was thought to have about him the flavour of what, he has now told the world, were the opinions he had derived in youth from the works of Thomas Scott. Mr. Keble, the "sweet singer of Israel," and a true saint, if this generation has seen one, did not reside in Oxford.* The chief Chair of Theology had been occupied by Bishop Lloyd, the old tutor, and the attached and intimate friend, of Peel: a man of powerful talents, and of a character both winning and decided, who, had his life been spared, might have modified essentially for good the fortunes of the Church of England, by guiding the energetic influences which his teaching had done much to form. But he had been hurried away in 1829 by an early death: and Dr. Whately, who was also, in his own way, a known power in the University, was in 1830 induced to accept the Archbishopric of Dublin. There was nothing, at that time, in the theology, or in the religious life, of the University to indicate what was soon to come.

68. But when, shortly afterwards, the great heart of England began to beat with the quickened pulsations of

* Since these lines were written I have learned, upon authority which cannot be questioned, that Mr. Keble acknowledged the justice of disestablishing the Irish Church.

a more energetic religious life, it was in Oxford that the stroke was most distinct and loud. An extraordinary change appeared to pass upon the spirit of the place. I believe it would be a moderate estimate to say that much beyond one half of the very flower of its youth chose the profession of Holy Orders; while an impression, scarcely less deep, seemed to be stamped upon a large portion of its lay pupils. I doubt whether at any period of its existence, either since the Reformation, or perhaps before it, the Church of England had reaped from either University, in so short a time, so rich a harvest. At Cambridge a similar lifting up of heart and mind seems to have been going on; and numbers of persons of my own generation, who at their public schools had been careless and thoughtless like the rest, appeared in their early manhood as soldiers of Christ, and ministers to the wants of His people, worthy, I believe, as far as man can be worthy, through their zeal, devotion, powers of mind, and attainments, of their high vocation.

69. It was not then foreseen what storms were about to rise. Not only in Oxford, but in England, during the years to which I refer, party spirit within the Church was reduced to a low ebb. Indiscretions there might be, but authority did not take alarm: it smiled rather, on the contrary, on what was thought to be in the main a recurrence both to first principles and to forgotten obligations. Purity, unity, and energy seemed, as three fair sisters hand in hand, to advance together. Such a state of things was eminently suited to act on impressible and sanguine minds. I, for one, formed a completely false estimate of what was about to happen: and believed that the Church of England, through the medium of a regenerated clergy and an intelligent and attached laity, would not only hold

her ground, but would even in great part probably revive the love and the allegiance both of the masses who were wholly falling away from religious observances, and of those large and powerful nonconforming bodies, the existence of which was supposed to have no other cause than the neglect of its duties by the National Church, which had long left the people as sheep without a shepherd.

70. And surely it would have required either a deeply saturnine or a marvellously prophetic mind to foretell that, in ten or twelve more years, that powerful and distinguished generation of clergy would be broken up: that at least a moiety of the most gifted sons, whom Oxford had reared for the service of the Church of England, would be hurling at her head the hottest bolts of the Vatican: that, with their deviation on the one side, there would arise a not less convulsive rationalistic movement on the other; and that the natural consequences would be developed in endless contention and estrangement, and in suspicions worse than either, because even less accessible, and even more intractable. Since that time, the Church of England may be said to have bled at every pore; and at this hour it seems occasionally to quiver to its very base. And yet, all the while, the religious life throbs more and more powerfully within her. Shorn of what may be called the romance and poetry of her revival, she abates nothing of her toil; and in the midst of every sort of partial indiscretion and extravagance, her great office in the care of souls is, from year to year, less and less imperfectly discharged. But the idea of asserting on her part those exclusive claims, which become positively unjust in a divided country governed on popular principles, has been abandoned by all parties in the State.

71. There was an error not less serious in my estimate of English Nonconformity. I remember the astonishment with which at some period,—I think in 1851–2,—after ascertaining the vast addition which had been made to the number of churches in the country, I discovered that the multiplication of chapels, among those not belonging to the Church of England, had been more rapid still. But besides the immense extension of its material and pastoral organisation, English Nonconformity (in general) appears now to have founded itself on a principle of its own, which forbids the alliance of the civil power with religion in any particular form or forms. I do not embrace that principle. But I must observe, in passing, that it is not less unjust than it is common, to stigmatise those who hold it as "political Dissenters"; a phrase implying that they do not dissent on religious grounds. But if they, because they object to the union of Church and State, are political Dissenters, it follows that all who uphold it are political Churchmen.

72. The entire miscalculation which I have now endeavoured to describe of the religious state and prospects of the country, was combined with a view of the relative position of governors and governed, since greatly modified; and the two together formed the groundwork of my error. These two causes led me into the excess of recommending the continued maintenance of a theory which was impracticable, and which, if it could have been enforced, would have been, under the circumstances of the country, less than just. For I never held that a National Church should be permanently maintained except for the nation; I mean either for the whole of it or, at least, for the greater part, with some kind of real concurrence or general acquiescence from the remainder.

73. Against the proposals of my book, Lord Macaulay has set up a theory of his own.*

"That we may give Mr. Gladstone his revenge, we will state concisely our own views respecting the alliance of Church and State. . .

"We consider the primary end of Government as a purely temporal end, the protection of the persons and property of men.

"We think that Government, like every other contrivance of human wisdom, from the highest to the lowest, is likely to answer its main end best, when it is constructed with a single view to that end. . . .

"Government is not an institution for the propagation of religion, any more than St. George's Hospital is an institution for the propagation of religion. And the most absurd and pernicious consequences would follow if Government should pursue as its primary end, that which can never be more than its secondary end: though intrinsically more important than its primary end. But a Government which considers the religious instruction of the people as a secondary end, and follows out that principle faithfully, will we think be likely to do much good and little harm."

74. These sentences, I think, give a fair view of Lord Macaulay's philosophy of Church Establishments. It has all the clearness and precision that might be expected from him. But I own myself unable to accept it as it stands. I presume to think that perhaps Lord Macaulay, like myself, made, from a limited induction, a hasty generalisation. The difference was, that his theory was right for the practical purpose of the time, while mine was wrong. Considered, however, in the abstract, that theory appears to me to claim kindred with the ethical code of another writer, not less upright, and not less limpid, so to speak, than Lord Macaulay himself, I mean Dr. Paley. And the upshot of it may be comprised

* 'Ed. Rev.,' April 1839, pp. 273–6.

in three words: Government is police. All other functions, except those of police proper, are the accidents of its existence. As if a man should say to his friend when in the country, "I am going up to town; can I take anything for you?" So the State, while busy about protecting life and property, will allow its officer of police to perform any useful office for the community, to instruct a wayfarer as to his road, or tell the passer by what o'clock it is, provided it does not interfere with his watching the pickpocket, or laying the strong hand upon the assassin. I doubt if it is possible to cut out, as it were, with a pair of scissors, patterns of policy, which shall solve for all time and place the great historic problem of the relation of the civil power to religion.

75. It seems to me that in every function of life, and in every combination with his fellow-creatures, for whatever purpose, the duties of man are limited only by his powers. It is easy to separate, in the case of a Gas Company or a Chess Club, the primary end for which it exists, from everything extraneous to that end. It is not so easy in the case of the State or of the family. If the primary end of the State is to protect life and property, so the primary end of the family is to propagate the race. But around these ends there cluster, in both cases, a group of moral purposes, variable indeed with varying circumstances, but yet inhering in the relation, and not external or merely incidental to it. The action of man in the State is moral, as truly as it is in the individual sphere; although it be limited by the fact that, as he is combined with others whose views and wills may differ from his own, the sphere of the common operations must be limited, first, to the things in which all are agreed; secondly, to the things in which, though they may not be

agreed, yet equity points out, and the public sense acknowledges, that the whole should be bound by the sense of the majority.

76. I can hardly believe that even those, including as they do so many men both upright and able, who now contend on principle for the separation of the Church from the State, are so determined to exalt their theorem to the place of an universal truth, that they ask us to condemn the whole of that process, by which, as the Gospel spread itself through the civilised world, Christianity became incorporated with the action of civil authority, and with the framework of public law.* In the course of human history, indeed, we perceive little of unmixed evil, and far less of universal good. It is not difficult to discern that (in the language of Bishop Heber) as the world became Christian, Christianity became worldly: that the average tone of a system, which embraces in its widespreading arms the entire community, is almost of necessity lower than that of a society which, if large, is still private, and into which no man enters except by his own deliberate choice, very possibly even at the cost of much personal and temporal detriment.

77. But Christ died for the race: and those who notice the limited progress of conversion in the world, until alliance with the civil authority gave to His religion a wider access to the attention of mankind, may be inclined to doubt whether, without that alliance, its immeasurable and inestimable social results would ever have been attained. Allowing for all that may be justly urged against the danger of mixing secular motives with

* [See, however, the first in the series of Dr. James Mozley's University Sermons; a remarkable introduction to a very remarkable series. In Dr. Mozley the Church of England has lost one, to say the least, of her most powerful minds.—W. E. G., 1878.]

religious administration, and above all against the intrusion of force into the domain of thought; I for one cannot desire that Constantine in the government of the empire, that Justinian in the formation of its code of laws, or that Charlemagne in refounding society, or that Elizabeth in the crisis of the English Reformation, should have acted on the principle that the State and the Church in themselves are separate or alien powers, incapable of coalition.

78. But there are two causes, the combined operation of which, upon reaching a certain point of development, relaxes or dissolves their union by a process as normal (if it be less beneficial) as that, by which the union was originally brought about. One of these is the establishment of the principle of popular self-government as the basis of political constitutions. The other is the disintegration of Christendom from one into many communions. As long as the Church at large, or the Church within the limits of the nation, is substantially one, I do not see why the religious care of the subject, through a body properly constituted for the purpose, should cease to be a function of the State, with the whole action and life of which it has, throughout Europe, been so long and so closely associated. As long as the State holds, by descent, by the intellectual superiority of the governing classes, and by the good will of the people, a position of original and underived authority, there is no absolute impropriety, but the reverse, in its commending to the nation the greatest of all boons.

79. But when, either by some Revolution of institutions from their summit to their base, or by a silent and surer process, analogous to that which incessantly removes and replaces the constituent parts of the human body, the State has come to be the organ of the deliberate and

ascertained will of the community, expressed through legal channels, then, indeed, the inculcation of a religion can no longer rest, in full or permanent force, upon its authority. And when, in addition to this, the community itself is split and severed into opinions and communions, which, whatever their concurrence in the basis of Christian belief, are hostile in regard to the point at issue, so that what was meant for the nation dwindles into the private estate as it were of a comparative handful, then the attempt to maintain an Established Church becomes an error fatal to the peace, dangerous perhaps even to the life, of civil society. Such a Church then becomes (to use a figure I think of John Foster's) no longer the temple, but the mere cenotaph of a great idea. Such a policy is thereafter not simply an attempt to treat what is superannuated and imbecile as if it were full of life and vigour, but to thwart the regular and normal action of the ruling social forces, to force them from their proper channels, and to turn them by artificial contrivance, as Apollo turned the rivers of Troas from their beds, to a purpose of our own. This is to set caprice against nature; and the end must be that, with more or less of delay, more or less of struggle or convulsion, nature will get the better of caprice.

80. But does it follow from all this, that the tone of moral action in the state should be lowered? Such a fear is what perplexes serious and sober men, who are laudably unwilling to surrender, in a world where falsehood has so wide a range, any portion of this vantage-ground of truth and right. I, who may have helped to mislead them by an over-hasty generalisation, would now submit what seems to me calculated to reassure the mind.

81. I make an appeal to the history of the last thirty years. During those years, what may be called the dogmatic allegiance of the State to religion has been greatly relaxed; but its consciousness of moral duty has been not less notably quickened and enhanced. I do not say this in depreciation of Christian dogma. But we are still a Christian people. Christianity has wrought itself into the public life of fifteen hundred years. Precious truths, and laws of relative right and the brotherhood of man, such as the wisdom of heathenism scarcely dreamed of and could never firmly grasp, the Gospel has made to be part of our common inheritance, common as the sunlight that warms us, and as the air we breathe. Sharp though our divisions in belief may be, they have not cut so deep as to prevent, or as perceptibly to impair, the recognition of these great outlines and fences of moral action. It is far better for us to trust to the operation of these our common principles and feelings, and to serve our Maker together in that wherein we are at one, rather than in aiming at a standard theoretically higher, to set out with a breach of the great commandment, which forms the groundwork of all relative duties, and to refuse to do as we would be done by.

82. It is, then, by a practical rather than a theoretic test that our Establishments of religion should be tried. In applying this practical test, we must be careful to do it with those allowances, which are as necessary for the reasoner in moral subjects, as it is for the reasoner in mechanics to allow for friction or for the resistance of the air. An Establishment that does its work in much, and has the hope and likelihood of doing it in more: an Establishment that has a broad and living way open to it, into the hearts

of the people: an Establishment that can commend the services of the present by the recollections and traditions of a far-reaching past: an Establishment able to appeal to the active zeal of the greater portion of the people, and to the respect or scruples of almost the whole, whose children dwell chiefly on her actual living work and service, and whose adversaries, if she has them, are in the main content to believe that there will be a future for them and their opinions: such an Establishment should surely be maintained.

83. But an establishment that neither does, nor has her hope of doing, work, except for a few, and those few the portion of the community whose claim to public aid is the smallest of all: an Establishment severed from the mass of the people by an impassable gulph, and by a wall of brass: an Establishment whose good offices, could she offer them, would be intercepted by a long unbroken chain of painful and shameful recollections: an Establishment leaning for support upon the extraneous aid of a State, which becomes discredited with the people by the very act of lending it: such an Establishment will do well for its own sake, and for the sake of its creed, to divest itself, as soon as may be, of gauds and trappings, and to commence a new career, in which, renouncing at once the credit and the discredit of the civil sanction, it shall seek its strength from within, and now at length learn to put a fearless trust in the message that it bears.

September 22, 1868.

IV.

THE LAW OF PROBABLE EVIDENCE AND ITS RELATION TO CONDUCT.*

1845.

1. The doctrine of Bishop Butler, in the Introduction to his 'Analogy,' with regard to probable evidence, lies at the root of his entire argument; for, by the analogy which he seeks to establish between natural religion and that which is revealed, he does not pretend to supply a demonstrative proof of Christianity, but only such a kind, and such an amount, of presumptions in its favour as to bind human beings at the least to take its claims into their serious consideration.† This, he urges, they must do, provided only they mean to act with regard to it upon those principles, which, in all other matters, are regarded as the principles of common sense. It is therefore essential to his purpose to show what are the obligations which, as inferred from the universal practice of men, probable or presumptive evidence may entail.

* First published in, and reprinted from, the *Nineteenth Century* for March 1879.

† The title of Bishop Butler's book is 'The Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature.' But, in the Introduction, sect. 3, the bishop describes his postulate in close correspondence with the phrase I have used in the text.

2. But indeed the subject-matter of this Introduction has yet a far wider scope. It embraces the rule of just proceeding, not only in regard to the examination of the pretensions of Christianity, but also in regard to the whole conduct of life. The former question, great as it is, has no practical existence for the vast majority, whether of the Christian world, or of the world beyond the precinct of the Christian profession. It is only relevant and material (except as an exercise of sound philosophy) to three descriptions of persons; those whom the Gospel for the first time solicits; those who have fallen away from it; and those who are in doubt concerning its foundation. Again, there are portions of these classes, to whose states of mind other modes of address may be more suitable. But every Christian, and indeed every man owning any kind of moral obligation, who may once enter upon any speculation concerning the grounds which dispose him to act, or to refrain from acting, is concerned in the highest degree with the subject that Bishop Butler has opened incidentally for the sake of its relation to his own immediate purpose.

3. The proposition of Bishop Butler, that probability is the guide of life, is not one invented for the purposes of his argument, nor held by believers alone. Voltaire has used nearly the same words :—

"Presque toute la vie humaine roule sur des probabilités. Tout ce qui n'est pas démontré aux yeux, ou reconnu pour vrai par les parties évidemment intéressées à le nier, n'est tout au plus que probable. . . . L'incertitude étant presque toujours le partage de l'homme, vous vous détermineriez très-rarement, si vous attendiez une démonstration. Cependant il faut prendre un parti: et il ne faut pas le prendre au hasard. Il est donc nécessaire à notre nature faible, aveugle, toujours sujette à l'erreur, d'étudier les

probabilités avec autant de soin, que nous apprenons l'arithmétique et la géométrie."

Voltaire wrote this passage in an Essay, not on religion, but on judicial inquiries : * and the statement of principle which it propounds is perhaps on that account even more valuable.

4. If we consider subjectively the reasons, upon which our judgments rest, and the motives of our practical intentions, it may in strictness be said that absolutely in no case have we more than probable evidence to proceed upon ; since there is always room for the entrance of error in that last operation of the percipient faculties of men, by which the objective becomes subjective ; an operation antecedent, of necessity, not only to action, or decision upon acting, but to the stage at which the perception becomes what is sometimes called a " state of consciousness." †

5. But, setting aside this consideration, and speaking only of what is objectively presented as it is in itself, a very small portion indeed of the subject-matter of practice is or can be of a demonstrative, or necessary, character. Moral action is conversant almost wholly with evidence, which in itself is only probable. So that a right understanding of the proper modes of dealing with it is the foundation of all ethical studies. Without this, it must either be dry and barren dogmatism, or else a mass of floating quicksands. Duty may indeed be done, without having been studied in the abstract; but, if it is to be studied, it must be studied under its true laws and con-

* ' Essai sur les probabilités en fait de Justice.'—*Works* (4to, Geneva, 1777), vol. xxvi. p. 457.

† *Nineteenth Century* for April 1879, pp. 606, 607.

ditions as a science. Now, probability is the nearly universal form or condition, under which these laws are applied: and therefore a sound view of it is not indeed ethical knowledge itself, but is the *organon*, by means of which that knowledge is to be rightly handled. He who, by his reasonings, at once teaches and inures men to the methods of handling probable or imperfect evidence, gives them exercise, and by exercise strength, in the most important of all those rules of daily life, which are connected with the intellectual habits.

6. Different forms of error concerning probable evidence have produced in some cases moral laxity, in others scrupulosity, in others unbelief.

To begin with the last named of these. It is a common form of fallacy to suppose that imperfect evidence cannot be the foundation of an obligation to religious belief, inasmuch as belief, although in its infancy it may fall short of intellectual conviction, tends towards that character in its growth and attains it when mature. Sometimes, indeed, it is assumed by the controversialist, that belief, if genuine, is essentially absolute. And it is taken to be a violation of the laws of the human mind that proofs which do not exclude doubt should be held to warrant a persuasion which does or may exclude it. Indeed, the celebrated argument of Hume, against the credibility of the miracles, involved the latent assumption that we have a right to claim demonstrative evidence for every proposition which demands our assent. From this assumption it proceeds to deny a demonstrative character to any proofs, except those supplied by our own experience. And the answer, which Paley has made to it, rests upon the proposition that the testimony adduced is such as, according to the common judgment and practice

of men, it is rational to believe; but he passes by without notice the question of its title to the rank of speculative certainty.

7. Next, with regard to the danger of scrupulosity. This has perhaps been less conspicuous in philosophical systems, than in its effect on the practical conduct of life by individuals. There are persons, certainly not among the well-trained and well-informed, who would attach a suspicion of dishonesty to any doctrine, which should give a warrant to acts of moral choice upon evidence admitted to be less than certain. Their disposition is deserving of respect, when it takes its rise from that simple unsuspecting confidence in the strength and clearness of truth, which habitual obedience engenders. It is less so when we see in it a timidity of mind, which shrinks from measuring the whole extent of the charge that it has pleased God to lay upon us as moral agents, and will not tread, even in the path of duty, upon any ground that yields beneath the pressure of the foot. The desire for certainty, in this form, enervates and unmans the character. Persons so affected can scarcely either search with effect for duties to be done, or accept them when offered, and almost forced upon their notice. As a speculative system, this tendency has appeared among some casuists of the Church of Rome, and has been condemned by Pope Innocent XI.

8. The position of many among her divines with reference to the danger of moral laxity opens much graver questions. The *Provincial Letters* of Pascal gave an universal notoriety to the doctrine of Probabilism. Setting apart the extremes to which it has been carried by individuals, we may safely take the representation of it, as it is supplied in a Manual published for the use of

the French clergy of the present day. According to this work, it is allowable, in matters of moral conduct, that if of two opposite opinions, each one be sustained not by a slight but a solid probability, and if the probability of the one be admittedly more solid than that of the other, we may follow our natural liberty of choice by acting upon the less probable. This doctrine, we are informed, had been taught, before 1667, by 159 authors of the Roman Church, and by multitudes since that date. It appears to stand in the most formal contradiction to the sentiments of Bishop Butler; who lays it down without hesitation that the lowest presumption, if not neutralised by a similar presumption on the opposite side, and the smallest real and clear excess of presumption on the one side over the presumptions on the other side, determines the reason in matters of speculation, and absolutely binds conduct in matter of practice. Such being the scope of the subject, and such the dangers to which it stands related, let us now proceed to its examination.

9. First we have to inquire, what is probability? Probability may be predicated whenever, in answer to the question whether a particular proposition be true, the affirmative chances predominate over the negative, yet not so as (virtually) to exclude doubt. And, on the other hand, improbability may be predicated, whenever the negative chances predominate over the affirmative, but subject to the same reservation that doubt be not precluded. For, if doubt be precluded, then certainty, affirmatively or negatively, as the case may be, must be predicated. In mathematical language, certainty, affirmative or negative, is the limit of probability on the one side, and of improbability on the other, as the circle is of the ellipse.

10. The relations of probabilities among themselves may be most clearly expressed by mathematical symbols. Let a represent the affirmative side of the proposition to be tried, b the negative, and let the evidence be exactly balanced between them. Then

$$a : b :: 1 : 1, \therefore \frac{a}{b} = 1.$$

Let the evidence so preponderate on the affirmative side that, out of one hundred and one cases presenting the same phenomena, in one hundred it would be true. Thus the expression is

$$a : b :: 100 : 1, \therefore \frac{a}{b} = \frac{100}{1} = 100.$$

Again, let the evidence be such that, out of one hundred and one cases presenting the same phenomena, in one hundred the proposition would turn out to be false: then the expression becomes

$$a : b :: 1 : 100, \therefore \frac{a}{b} = \frac{1}{100}.$$

And it is clear that—

(1.) When the second side of this equation consists of an integer or an improper fraction, the proposition is probable.

(2.) As the numerator becomes indefinitely great it represents probability approaching towards certainty. This it can never adequately express: but no fixed limit can be placed upon the advances which may be made towards it.

(3.) When the second side of this equation consists of a proper fraction, the proposition is improbable.

(4.) As the denominator becomes indefinitely great, it represents improbability approaching towards negative

certainty, or, as it is sometimes, perhaps improperly, called, impossibility.

11. But the sphere of probability, according to Bishop Butler, includes not only truths but events, past and future: and it likewise comprehends questions of conduct, or precepts, which may be said to form a class apart, both from truths and from events: whereas the definition here given turns simply upon the preponderance of chances for the truth or falsehood of a proposition. How shall we broaden that definition?

The answer is that truths, events past and future, and questions of conduct, may all be accurately reduced into the form of propositions true or false, by the use of their respective symbols: for the first, the symbol *is;* for the second, *has been* or *will be;* and for the third, *ought to be.* In one or other of these forms, every conceivable proposition can be tried in respect to its probability.

12. It is necessary also to observe upon an ambiguity in the use of the term probable. It has been defined in the sense in which it is opposed to the term improbable; but, in a discussion on the character of probable evidence, probable and improbable propositions are alike included. When, for this purpose, we are asked what does probability designate? the answer is, that which may or may not be. We have no word exclusively appropriated to this use. In the Greek, Aristotle conveniently designates it τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον ἄλλως ἔχειν, as opposed to τὸ ἀδύνατον ἄλλως ἔχειν. Sometimes this is called contingent, as distinguished from necessary, matter; and safely so called, if it be always borne in mind that we are dealing with propositions, with certain instruments supplied by human language, and adapted to our thoughts, but not with things as they are in themselves; that the same

thing may be subjectively contingent and objectively certain, as, for example, the question whether such a person as Homer has existed: which to us is a subject of probable inquiry, but in itself is manifestly of necessary matter, whether the proposition be true or false. So, again, in speaking of future events, to call them contingent in any sense except with regard to the propositions in which we discuss them, is no less an error; because, whether upon the necessitarian or the ordinary Christian hypothesis, future events are manifestly certain and not contingent; it remaining as a separate question whether they are so fixed by necessity, or as the offspring of free volition. It may be enough, then, for the present to observe that the "probable evidence" of Bishop Butler reaches over the whole sphere, of which it is common to speak as that of contingent matter; and that the element of uncertainty involved in the phrase concerns not the things themselves that are in question, but only the imperfection of the present means of conveying them to our minds. To the view of the Most High God, who knows all things, there is no probability and no contingency, but "all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him, with whom we have to do."

13. In His case, and in every case of knowledge properly and strictly so called, the existence of the thing known is perceived without the intervention of any medium of proof. But evidence is, according to our use of the term, essentially intermediate; something apart both from the percipient and the thing perceived, and serving to substantiate to the former, in one degree or another, the existence of the latter. Thus we speak of the evidence of the senses, meaning those impressions upon our bodily organs which are made by objects visible, audible, and the like. These respectively make, as it

were, their assertions to us; which we cross-examine by reflection, and by comparison of the several testimonies affecting the same object. And, with regard to things incorporeal, in the sphere of the probable, it seems that, in like manner, the impressions they produce upon our mental faculties, acting without the agency of sense, are also strictly in the nature of evidence, of presumption more or less near to demonstration, concerning the reality of what they represent; but subject always to a similar process of verification and correction.

14. The whole notion, therefore, of evidence seems to belong essentially to a being of limited powers. For no evidence can prove anything except what exists, and all that exists may be the object of direct perception. The necessity of reaching our end through the circuitous process implies our want of power to go straight to the mark.

15. And it further appears that the same idea implies not only the limitation of range in the powers of the being who makes use of evidence, but likewise their imperfection even in the processes which they are competent to perform. The assurance possessed by such a being cannot be of the highest order, which the laws of the spiritual creation, so far as they are known to us, would admit. However truly it may be adequate, and even abundant, to sustain his mind in any particular conviction, it must be inferior to science in its proper signification, that of simple or absolute knowledge, which is the certain and exact, and also conscious, coincidence of the intuitive faculty with its proper object. For it is scarcely conceivable that any accumulation of proofs, each in itself short of demonstration, and therefore including materials of unequal degrees of solidity, should, when put together,

form a whole absolutely and entirely equivalent to the single homogeneous act of pure knowledge.

16. The same conclusion, that imperfection pervades all our mental processes, at which we have arrived by a consideration of their nature, we may also draw from the nature of the faculties by which they are conducted. For there is no one faculty of any living man of which, speaking in the sense of pure and rigid abstraction, we are entitled to say that it is infallible in any one of its acts. And no combination of fallibles can, speaking always in the same strictness, make up an infallible; however by their independent coincidence they may approximate towards it, and may produce a result which is for us indistinguishable from, and practically, therefore, equivalent to, it.

17. Certainly that, which is fallible, does not therefore always err. It may, in any given case, perform its duty without fault, and as though it were infallible; just as a sum in arithmetic, that is rightly worked by one of us, could not be more right if it were worked by an infallible Intelligence. The fallibility of our faculties therefore may not prevent our having knowledge that in itself is absolute. But at the least it prevents our separating what may be had with such knowledge from what we grasp with a hold less firm. In any survey, or classification, of what we have perceived or concluded, since the faculty which discriminates is fallible, the reservations, which its imperfection requires, must attach to the results we attain by it. So that, although we might have this knowledge, if we consider knowledge simply as the exact correspondence of the percipient faculty with its proper object, we could not make ourselves conscious of the real rank of that knowledge in a given case; we could not know what things they are

that we thus know, nor consequently could we argue from them as known.

18. Since, then, nothing can be known except what exists, nor *known* otherwise than in the exact manner in which it exists, knowledge, in its scientific sense, can only be predicated—first, *of* perceptions which are absolutely and exactly true, and secondly, *by* a mind which in the same sense knows them to be absolutely and exactly true. It seems to follow, that it is only by a licence of speech that the term knowledge can be predicated by us as to any of our perceptions. Assuming that our faculties, acting faithfully, are capable in certain cases of conveying to us scientific knowledge, still no part of what is so conveyed can, when it stands in review before our consciousness, carry the certain indefectible marks of what it is. And since there is no one of them, with regard to which it is abstractedly impossible that the thing it represents should be otherwise than as it is represented, we cannot, except by such licence of speech as aforesaid, categorically predicate of any one of them that precise correspondence of the percipient faculty, with the thing perceived, which constitutes knowledge pure and simple.

19. It is desirable that we should fully realise this truth, in order that we may appreciate the breadth and solidity of the ground, on which Bishop Butler has founded his doctrine of probable evidence. We ought to perceive that, observing his characteristic caution, he has kept within limits narrower than the basis, which the laws of the human mind, viewed through a medium purely abstract, would have allowed him to occupy. His habit was to encamp near to the region of practice in all his philosophical inquiries; that he might appease, and thus gently reclaim, the contemptuous infidelity of his age.

A rigid statement of the whole case concerning our knowledge would probably have startled those whom he sought to attract, and have given them a pretext for retreating, at the very threshold, from the inquiry to which he invited them. Considerations of this kind are, indeed, applicable very generally to the form, in which Bishop Butler has propounded his profound truths for popular acceptation. But it is manifest that, if he even understated the case with regard to probable evidence, his argument is simply corroborated by taking into view all that residue, which he did not directly put into requisition.

20. He was engaged in an endeavour to show to those, who demanded an absolute certainty in the proofs of religion, that this demand was unreasonable; and the method he pursued in this demonstration was, to point out to them, how much of their own daily conduct was palpably and rightly founded upon evidence less than certain. The unreasonableness of such a demand becomes still more glaring in the eyes of persons not under adverse prepossession, when we find by reflection that no one of our convictions, or perceptions, can in strictness be declared to possess the character of scientific knowledge. Because, if such be the case, we cannot rebut this consequence: that, even if a demonstration intrinsically perfect were presented to us, the possibility of error would still exist in the one link remaining; namely, that subjective process of our faculties by which it has to be appropriated. This (so to speak) primordial element of uncertainty never could be eliminated, except by the gift of inerrability to the individual mind. But such a gift would amount to a fundamental change in the laws of our nature. Again, in the particular case of belief, such a change would obviously dislocate the entire con-

ditions of the inquiry, which appears to turn upon the credibility of revealed religion as it is illustrated by its suitableness to—what? not to an imaginable and unrealised, but to the actual, experienced condition of things.

21. To the conclusion that scientific knowledge can never be consciously entertained by the individual mind, it is no answer, nor any valid objection, to urge that such a doctrine unsettles the only secure foundation on which we can build, destroys mental repose, and threatens confusion. For, even if a great and grievous fault in the condition of the world were thus to be exposed, we are not concerned here with the question whether our state is one of abstract excellence, but simply with the facts of it such as they are. We cannot enter into the question, whether it is abstractedly best that our faculties should be liable to error. That is one of the original conditions, under which we live. No objection can be drawn from it to an argument in favour of revelation, unless it can be shown either, first, that, on account of liability to error, they become practically useless for the business of acting or of inquiring; or else, secondly, that the materials to be examined in the case of Revelation are not so fairly cognisable by them, as the materials of other examinations, which, by the common judgment and practice of mankind, they are found to be competent to conduct and determine.

22. But the state of things around us amply shows that this want of scientific certainty, is in point of fact no reproach to our condition, no practical defect in it. Rather it is a law, which associates harmoniously with the remainder of its laws. The nature of our intelligence makes no demand for such assurance; this is evident, because we are not capable of receiving it. Nay, we cannot

so much as arrive at the notion of it, without an effort of abstraction. Our moral condition appears still less to crave anything of the kind. If we allow that sin is in the world (no matter, for the purpose of this argument, how it came there), and that we are placed under the dominion of a moral Governor Who seeks by discipline to improve His creatures, it is not difficult to give reasons in support of the proposition that intellectual inerrability is not suited to such a state. One such reason we may find in the recollection, that the moral training of an inferior by a superior either essentially involves, or at the least suitably admits of, the element of trust. Now the region of probable evidence is that which gives to such an element the freest scope; because trust in another serves to supply, within due limits, the shortcomings of direct argumentative proof; and when such proof is ample, but at the same time deals with materials which we are not morally advanced enough to appreciate, trust (as in the case of a child before its parents) fulfils for us a function, which could not otherwise be discharged at all. I must not, however, attempt to discuss, at any rate on the present occasion, the subject, a wide and deep subject, of the shares, and mutual relations, of intellectual and moral forces in the work of attaining truth.

23. Passing on, then, from the subject of scientific certainty, let us observe that the region next below this, to which all the propositions entertained in the human mind belong, is divided principally into two parts. The higher of these is that of what is commonly called *necessary* matter: and certainty would, in its ordinary sense, be predicated of all that lies within its range. That is to say, certainty with a relation to our nature: a certainty subjectively not defective: a certainty which fixes our

perceptions, conclusions, or convictions, in such a frame as to render them immovable: a certainty not merely which is unattended with doubt, but which excludes doubt, which leaves no available room for its being speculatively entertained, which makes it on the whole irrational. With this certainty we hold that bodies fall by the force of gravity; that air is rarefied at great altitudes; that the limit of human age established by all modern experience is not very greatly beyond a century; that the filial relation entails a duty of obedience. The certainty repudiated in the antecedent argument is only that of the Stoical "perception." In the words of the Academical philosophy, "Nihil est enim aliud, quamobrem nihil *percipi* mihi posse videatur, nisi quod percipiendi vis ita definitur a Stoicis, ut negent quidquam posse percipi, nisi tale verum, quale falsum esse non possit."* But certainty of an order so high, as to make doubt plainly irrational, applies to various classes of our ideas.

24. This is the region of the ἐπιστητὸν of Aristotle,† and the faculties employed in it are chiefly, according to him, νοῦς‡ for principles, ἐπιστήμη for inferences from them. It has been defined as the region of the *Vernunft* in the modern German philosophy, of the Reason by Coleridge. It seems to be largely recognised by the most famous schools of the ancients. It contains both simple ideas, and demonstrations from them. It embraces moral, as well as other metaphysical, entities. It had no place in the philosophy of Locke. As regards the distinction of faculty between Reason and Understanding, *Vernunft* and *Verstand*, I am not inculcating an opinion of my own, but simply stating one which is widely current.

* Cic. *De Fin.* v. 26. † *Eth. Nicom.* vi. 3, 2. ‡ *Ibid.* vi. 6, 2.

25. The lower department is that in which doubt has its proper place, and in which the work of the understanding is to compare and to distinguish; to elicit approximations to unity from a multitude of particulars, and to certainty from a combination and equipoise of presumptions. It is taken to be the province of all those faculties, or habits, of which Aristotle treats under the several designations of φρόνησις, τέχνη, εὐβουλία, σύνεσις, γνώμη, and others;* of the *Verstand* of the Germans, of the Understanding according to Coleridge. It embraces multitudes of questions of speculation, and almost all questions of practice. Of speculation: as, for example, what are the due definitions of cases in which verbal untruth may be a duty, or in which it is right to appropriate a neighbour's goods. Of practice, because every question of practice is embedded in details: if, for example, we admit that it is right to give alms, we have to decide whether the object is good, and whether we can afford the sum. Because, even where the principles are ever so absolute, simple, and unconditioned, they can rarely be followed to conclusions, either in theory or practice, without taking into view many particulars, with various natures, and various degrees, of evidence. This is the region of probable evidence.

26. The highest works achieved in it are those, in which the combinations it requires are so rapid and so perfect, that they are seen, like a wheel in very rapid revolution, as undivided wholes, not as assemblages of parts; in a word that they resemble the objects of intuition. Towards this, at the one end of the scale, there may be indefinite approximation: and below these, there are innumerable

* *Eth. Nicom.* b. vi. 4, 5, 9, 10, 11.

descending degrees of evidence, down to that in which the presumption of truth in any given proposition is so faint as to be scarcely perceptible.

27. From what has now been said, it is manifest that the province of probable evidence, thus marked off, is a very wide one. But, in fact, it is still wider than it appears to be. For many truths, which are the objects of intuition to a well-cultivated mind of extended scope, are by no means such to one of an inferior order, or of a less advanced discipline. By such, they can only be reached through circuitous processes of a discursive nature, if at all. In point of fact there appear to be many, who have scarcely any clear intuitions, any perceptions of truths as absolute, self-dependent, and unchanging. If so, then not only all the detailed or concrete questions of life and practice, to which the idea of duty is immediately applicable, for all minds, but likewise the entire operations of some minds, are situated in the region of probable evidence.

28. The mode in which the understanding performs its work, within this region, is by bringing together things that are like, and by separating things that are unlike. To this belong its various processes of induction and discourse, of abstraction and generalisation, and the rest. Therefore Bishop Butler teaches that the chief element of probability is that which is expressed "in the word likely, *i.e.*, like some truth or true event."

29. The form of assent, which belongs to the result of these processes, may properly be termed belief. It is bounded, so to speak, by knowledge on the one hand where it becomes not only plenary, so as to exclude doubt, but absolute and self-dependent, so as not to rest upon any support extrinsic to the object. It is similarly

bounded on the other side by mere opinion; where the matter is very disputable, the presumptions faint and few, or the impression received by a slight process and (as it were) at haphazard, without an examination proportioned to the nature of the object and of the faculties concerned. Of course no reference is here made to the case in which, by a modest or lax form of common speech, opinion is used as synonymous with judgment. Opinion, as it has now been introduced, corresponds with the δόξα of the Greeks: and approaches to the signification in which it is used by St. Augustine, who, after commending those who know, and those who rightly inquire, proceeds to say "tria sunt alia hominum genera, profecto improbanda ac detestanda. Unum est opinantium; id est eorum, qui se arbitrantur scire quod nesciunt."*

30. It may indeed, or may not, be convenient to attach† the name of belief to such judgments as are formed where some living or moral agent, and his qualities, enter into the medium of proof; inasmuch as in such cases there is a power to assume false appearances, which complicates the case: and inasmuch as the process must be double, first to establish the general credibility of the person, then to receive his particular testimony. This seems, however, more properly to bear the name of faith, with which belief is indeed identical in the science of theology, but not in common speech. For faith involves the element of trust, which essentially requires a moral agent for its object. Apart from any technical sense which the word may have acquired in theology, and more at large, human language warrants and requires our applying the name of

* S. Aug. *De Utilitate Credendi*, c. xi.
† With Bishop Pearson. *On the Creed*, Art. I. sect. 1.

belief to all assent which is given to propositions founded upon probable evidence.

31. The tastes of many, and the understandings of some, will suggest that this qualified mode of statement is disparaging to the dignity of conclusions belonging to religion and to duty. But let not the suggestion be hastily entertained. It is in this field that moral elements most largely enter into the reasonings of men, and the discussion of their legitimate place in such reasonings has already been waived. For the present let it suffice to bear in mind that there is no limit to the strength of working, as distinguished from abstract, certainty, to which probable evidence may not lead us along its gently ascending paths.

32. There is, therefore, a kind of knowledge of which we are incapable: namely, that which necessarily implies the existence of an exactly corresponding object.

There is a kind of knowledge, less properly so called, which makes doubt wholly, irrational; and which may often be predicated in a particular case, whether it be by an act of intuition, or by a process of demonstration.

There is, thirdly, a kind of mental perception or impression, to which also in common speech, but yet less properly, the name of knowledge is frequently applied. It is generically inferior to knowledge, but approaches and even touches it at points where the evidence on which it rests is in its highest degrees of force: descending below this to that point of the scale, at which positive and negative presumptions are of equal weight and the mind is neutral. There is a possibility that the very same subject-matter which at one time lies, for a particular person, in the lower of these regions, may at another time reside in the higher.

33. If, then, it be allowable, and it is not only allowable but inevitable, to collect the laws of the human intelligence by the observation of its processes, which in fact grows to be an induction from universal practice, it is manifest that we are so constituted as to yield assent to propositions having various kinds and degrees of evidence. We agree to some as immediate, and (to our apprehensions) necessary: to some as necessary but not immediate: to some as originally neither necessary nor immediate, but as presenting subsequently a certainty and solidity not distinguishable from that which appertains to the former classes. Again, we yield our assent to others of a different class, which falls into sub-classes. These have various degrees of likelihood in subject-matter infinitely diversified; some of them so high as to exclude doubt, some admitting yet greatly outweighing it by positive evidence, some nearly balanced between the affirmative and the negative: but in all cases with a preponderance on the former side. All these are formed to attract legitimate assent, according to the laws of our intellectual constitution; which has universal truth for its object, and affirmation and rejection for its office. With other processes, such as assent given under blind prejudice against probability, or purely arbitrary conjecture, or the *quasi*-truths of the imagination, we have in this place nothing to do.

34. The doctrine, that we are bound by the laws of our nature to follow probable truth, rests upon the most secure of all grounds for practical purposes, if indeed the consent which accepts it is in fact so widely spread in the usual doings of mankind, that it may well be termed universal. The very circumstance that there are exceptions confirms the rule, provided it may be maintained that the exceptions are of a certain kind. For conversely,

if there be a practice invariably followed by those who are known to be wise in kindred subject-matter, it is often doubtful whether this can be said to derive any positive confirmation from the concurrent course of persons who are known to be of an opposite character. Again, if there be an universal agreement concerning any proposition among those who have no sinister bias, the fact that others who are known to have such a bias differ from them does not impair their authority, but may even appear rather to constitute an additional evidence of their being in the right. Now this is exactly the kind of consent, which may justly be said to obtain among men with regard to the following of probable truth. For every one acts upon affirmative evidence, however inferior to certainty, unless he be either extremely deficient in common understanding, or so biassed the other way by his desires as to be incapable of an upright view of the case before him. Even the last-named class of excepted instances would generally take the form rather of an inability, under the circumstances, to perceive the evidence, than of a denial of its authority.

35. But the doctrine itself appears to be as irrefragably established in theoretic reasoning, as it is in the practice of mankind. We may, however, distinguish those propositions which are abstract, from such as entail any direct consequences in our conduct. With regard to the former, suspension of judgment is allowable in all cases where serious doubt appears before examination, or remains after it. Whether Rome was built 753 years before our Lord, whether King Charles the First wrote the *Eikon Basilike*, whether Caligula made his horse a Consul, whether St. Paul visited Britain,—these are questions which present no such evidence as to bind

our judgment either way, and any decision we may form about them has no bearing on our conduct. But to doubt whether the empire of the Cæsars existed, or whether King Charles was beheaded, or perhaps whether he said "remember" to Bishop Juxon on the scaffold, or whether Michael Angelo painted the "Last Judgment" in the Sistine Chapel,—this, after the question had once been presented fairly to our minds, would be a violation of the laws of our intellectual nature. It would be in any case a folly, and it would even be a sin if moral elements were involved in the judgment, for instance if the disbelief arose from a spirit of opposition, and self-assertion, predisposing us unfavourably to conclusions that others have established, and that have obtained general acceptance.

36. At the least, I say, it would be a violation of the law of our intellectual nature; if indeed the one obligation of that nature is to recognise truth wheresoever it is fallen in with, and to assent to it. The effect of the obligation cannot be confined to cases of immediate or intuitive knowledge. For, in the first place, this would be to cast off the chief subject-matter of our understanding, or discursive faculty. If we admit the current definition of the term, it would even be to leave all that organ, in which the mind chiefly energises, without an office, and therefore without a lawful place in our nature. But, in the second place, let us observe how the denial of all assent to probable conclusions will comport with our general obligations. A great mass of facts from some history are before us. There may be error here and there in particulars, but their general truth is unquestioned; and upon a given point, taken at random, the chances are probably a hundred to one or more that it is true. Of

two persons each having a hundred such facts, independent of one another, before him, one, acting upon the ordinary rule, receives them; and he has the truth in ninety-nine cases conjoined with error in one: the other, rejecting them, has neither the one error, nor the ninety-nine truths; his understanding has refused its work, and lost its reward in the ninety-nine cases, for fear of the failure in the one. And further we are to remember that the error in the one is material only, not formal. It has not of necessity any poisonous quality. It is more like a small portion of simply innutritious food received along with the mass of what is wholesome.

37. The case has indeed here been put upon the hypothesis of very high probability. What shall we say to propositions, of which the evidence is less certain? The answer is, that no line can be drawn in abstract argument between them: that the obligation which attaches to the former attaches to the latter: that it must subsist, so long as there remains any preponderance of affirmative evidence, which is real, and of such a magnitude as to be appreciable by our faculties. But at the same time, although this be true in the cases where it is necessary for us to conclude one way or the other, it is not applicable to the multitude of cases where no such necessity exists. Sometimes a total suspension of judgment, sometimes a provisional assent, consciously subject to future correction upon enlarged experience, are the remedies offered to our need, and very extended indeed is their scope and use for prudent minds. Of course it remains true that the understanding, when it has to choose the objects of its own activity, may justly select those on which a competent certainty is attainable, instead of stimulating a frivolous and barren curiosity, by employing itself on

matters incapable of satisfactory determination by such means as are ordinarily at our command.

38. Whether, then, we look to the constitution of our nature, and the ὕλη or matter provided for it to work upon, together with the inference arising from the combined view of the two; or whether we regard the actual results as realised in the possession of truth; we find it to be a maxim sustained by theory, as well as by the general consent and practice of men, that the mind is not to be debarred from assent to a proposition with which it may have cause to deal, on account of the circumstance that the evidence for it is short of that which is commonly called certain; and that to act upon an opposite principle would be to contravene the law of our intellectual nature.

39. But now let us deal, so far as justly belongs to the purpose of this paper, with that part of the subject-matter of human inquiry where moral ingredients are essentially involved. For hitherto we have spoken mainly of such kind of obligation as may attach to geometrical investigations, in which usually the will has no concern either one way or the other.

With regard to moral science properly so styled, whether it be conversant with principles, when it is called ethical, or whether it be concerned with their application to particulars, when it becomes casuistry, although the whole of it is practical, as it aims to fix the practical judgments and the conduct of all men, yet obviously the whole cannot be said to be practical in regard to each individual. For the experience of one person will only raise a part, perhaps a very small part, of the questions which it involves. So far, then, as moral inquiries properly belong to science and not to life, they are pursued in the abstract, and they are subject to

the general laws of intellectual inquiry which have already been considered; only with this difference, that our judgments in them are much more likely to be influenced by the state of our affections and the tenor of our lives, by our conformity to, or alienation from, the will of God, than where the matter of the propositions themselves had no relation to human conduct.

40. But, for the government of life, all men, though in various degrees, require to be supplied with certain practical judgments. For there is no breathing man, to whom the alternatives of right and wrong are not continually present. To one they are less, perhaps infinitely less, complicated than to another; but they pervade the whole tissue of every human life. In order to meet these, we must be supplied with certain practical judgments. It matters not that there may have existed particular persons, as children, for instance, who have never entertained these judgments in the abstract at all; nor that many act blindly, and at haphazard, which is simply a contempt of duty; nor that there may be another class, into whose compositions by long use some of them are so ingrained, that they operate with the rapidity and certainty of instinct. Setting these aside, it remains true of all persons of developed understanding that there are many questions bearing on practice, with regard to which, in order to discharge their duty rightly, they must have conclusions, and these not necessarily numerous in every case, but in every case of essential importance, so that they may be termed "a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death."

41. Now it is in this department that the argument for the obligation to follow probable evidence is of the greatest force and moment. It has been seen, how that

obligation may be qualified or suspended in the pursuit of abstract truth; so much so, that even the contravention of it need not involve a breach of moral duty. But the case is very different when we deal with those portions of truth that supply the conditions of conduct. To avoid all detail, such as may dissipate the force of the main considerations, is material. Let it therefore be observed that there is one proposition in which the whole matter, as it is relevant to human duty, may be summed up: that all our works alike, inward and outward, great and small, ought to be done in obedience to God. Now this is a proposition manifestly tendered to us by that system of religion which is called Christianity, and which purports to be a revelation of the Divine will. It is the first and great commandment of the Gospel, that we shall love God with the whole heart, and mind, and soul, and strength;* and whatsoever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God.† And as every act is, *ceteris paribus*, determined, and is at the very least in all cases qualified, by its motive, this proposition concerning an universal obedience as the ground and rule of conduct, is of all propositions the one most practical, the one most urgently requiring affirmation or denial according as the evidence may be in favour of or against its truth.

42. We seem, then, to have arrived at this point: the evidences of religion relate to a matter not speculative, not in abstract matter, which we may examine or pass by according to our leisure. It is either true or false: this on all hands will be admitted. If it be false, we are justified in repudiating it, so soon as we have obtained proofs of its falsity, such as the constitution of our minds

* St. Mark xii. 30, St. Luke x. 27. † St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 31.

entitles us to admit in that behalf. But we are bound by the laws of our intellectual nature not to treat it as false before examination. In like manner, by the laws of our moral nature, which oblige us to adjust all our acts according to our sense of some standard of right and wrong, we are not less stringently bound to use every effort in coming to a conclusion one way or the other respecting it: inasmuch as it purports to supply us with the very and original standard to which that sense is to be referred, through a sufficient Revelation of the will of God, both in its detail, and especially in that with which we are now concerned, the fundamental principle of a claim to unlimited obedience, admitting no exception and no qualification.

43. The maxim that Christianity is a matter not abstract, but referable throughout to human action, is not an important only, but a vital part of the demonstration, that we are bound by the laws of our nature to give a hearing to its claims. We shall therefore do well to substantiate it to our consciousness by some further mention of its particulars. Let us then recollect that we have not merely the general principle of doing all to the glory of God, declared by it in general terms: but this is illustrated by reference to the common actions of eating and drinking.* "Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do," thus the passage runs, "let us do all to the glory of God." Now surely, one should have said, if any acts whatever could have been exempt from the demands of this comprehensive law, they should have been those functions of animal life, respecting which, as to their substance, we have no free choice, since they are among

* St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 31.

the absolute conditions of our physical existence. And by the unbeliever it might consistently be argued that, inasmuch as food and drink are thus necessary, it is impossible to conceive that any question relating to the different kinds of them (unless connected with their several aptitudes for maintaining life and health, which is not at all in the Apostle's view) can be of any moral moment. But the allegation of Scripture is directly to a contrary effect: and apprises us that even such a matter as eating or refraining from meat, has a spiritual character.* "He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Not only (as the entire passage seems to mean) where a special scruple may be raised by the facts of idol worship; not only in the avoidance of pampered tastes and gross excesses; but in the simple act of taking food, the religious sense has a place. The maintenance of life, though it is a necessity, is also a duty and a blessing.

44. And to the same effect is the declaration of our Lord: "But I say unto you that every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."† The "idle word" is perhaps the very slightest and earliest form of voluntary action. Consider the fertility of the mind, and the rapidity of its movements: how many thoughts pass over it without or against the will; how easily they find their way into the idle, that is, not the mischievous or ill-intended, but merely the unconsidered word. So lightly and easily is

* Rom. xiv. 6. † Matt. xii. 36.

it born, that the very forms of ancient speech seem to designate it as if it were self-created, and not the offspring of a mental act,*

Ἀτρείδη, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων;

and as we say, such and such an expression "escaped him." Thus then it appears that, at the very first and lowest stage of scarcely voluntary action, the Almighty God puts in His claim. In this way He acquaints us that everything, in which our faculties can consciously be made ministers of good or evil, shall become a subject of reckoning, doubtless of just and fatherly reckoning, in the great account of the day of judgment.

45. Further, it appears that there are many acts, of which the external form must be the same, whether they are done by Christians, or by others; as for instance those very acts of satisfying hunger and thirst, of which we have spoken. If these, then, are capable, as has been shown, of being brought under the law of duty, a different character must attach to them in consequence; they must be influenced, if not intrinsically, yet at least in their relation to something else, by their being referred to that standard. The form of the deed, the thing done, the πρᾶγμα, is perhaps, as we have seen, the same; but the action, the exercise of the mind in ordering or doing it, the πρᾶξις, is different. It differs, for example, in the motive of obedience; in the end, which is the glory of God; in the temper, which is that of trust, humility, and thankfulness. Accordingly, it appears that Christianity aims not only at adjusting our acts, but also our way of acting, to a certain standard; that it reduces the whole to

* Iliad, iv. 350.

a certain mental habit, and imbues and pervades the whole with a certain temper.

46. Not therefore at a venture, but with strict reason, the assertion has been made, that the question, whether Christianity be true or false, is the most practical of all questions: because it is that question of practice which incloses in itself, and implicitly determines, every other: it supplies the fundamental rule or principle (*Grundsatz*) of every decision in detail. And, consequently, it is of all other questions the one upon which those, who have not already a conclusion available for use, are most inexorably bound to seek for one. And, by further consequence, it is also the question to which the duty of following affirmative evidence, even although it should present to the mind no more than a probable character, and should not, *ab initio*, or even thereafter, extinguish doubt, has the closest and most stringent application.

47. Now the foregoing argument, it must be observed, includes and decides the question for what is commonly called the doctrinal part of the Christian religion; for those objective facts, which it lays as the foundation of its system, and which are set forth in the historical Creeds of the Catholic Church. It is not necessary here to enter upon the inquiry how far the internal evidence about suitableness to our state, which the nature of those facts offers to us, may constitute a part or a proof of, or an objection to, the truth of the Christian Revelation. I have not in any manner prejudged that question by the foregoing observations; I have shown its claims to nothing (where there is no conviction already formed) beyond a hearing and an adjudication. But in those claims the doctrinal part of the Revelation, that which is distinct from the law of duty, has a full and coequal share with the moral

part. The Christian system neither enjoins nor permits any severance between the two. Being inseparably associated, and resting upon the testimony of precisely the same witnesses, they on that account stand in precisely the same authoritative relation to our practice. Accordingly, when we accept or reject the Christian law of duty as such, we accept or reject also the system in which, and as a part of which, it is revealed. Whether we refer to the Scriptures, or to the collateral evidence of history and of the Church, we find it to be undeniable as a fact that Christianity purports to be not a system of moral teaching only, but, in vital union therewith, a system of revealed facts concerning the nature of God, and His dispensations towards mankind. Upon these facts, which centre in our Lord and Saviour, moral teaching is to rest, and to these it is to be indissolubly attached. Thus the part of Christianity, called doctrinal, has that claim to enter into our affirmative or negative decision, which belongs to a question strictly practical. It is, therefore, one, to which we inevitably must daily and hourly say Aye or No by our actions, even if we have given no speculative reply upon it.

48. To point out more clearly this connexion of the Christian dogma with practice, I may remark that the principal part of the matter of the Christian Creeds is a declaration of the nature of God, who is the object of our Faith: along with the main facts of that Incarnation of our Lord, which is the appointed medium of our reunion with Deity. Subjoined hereto is simply a declaration of belief in the Church, as the society in which we claim membership with Christ, and with one another; in the Baptism, whereby we find entrance into that society; and in the Resurrection, which connects the present with the

eternal Kingdom of our Lord. It is no paradox to suggest that a religion, which purports to open the means of reunion with God, and to restore the eternal life which we have lost, by means of a spiritual process wrought upon us, should propound, as essential constituents of that process, a faith to be held concerning the nature and attributes of Him whose image we are to bear; concerning the assumption of our nature by the Redeemer, which makes that image approachable and attainable; concerning the dispensation of time for forming our union with Him; and the dispensation of eternity, in which the union with Him becomes consummate and imperishable. Christianity is the religion of the Person of Christ; and the Creeds only tell us from whom He came, and how He came and went, by what Agent we are to be incorporated into Him, and what is the manner of His appointed agency, and the seal of its accomplishment.

49. But there is a latent notion in the minds of some men, that a matter so important as Christianity ought to be presented with the fullest evidence: that it would be unworthy of it, and of its Author, to suppose any Revelation from Him imperfectly attested. But, in the first place, such an objection is of no value whatever, unless it will carry us so far as to warrant our holding such language as the following:—"Although there be, apart from this notion, a balance of evidence in favour of Christianity over anything urged against it, yet I will reject it, upon the ground that I consider it unworthy of the Almighty to propound anything for acceptance without demonstrative proofs of it made immediately accessible to us." Now who, that admits the general recognition of probable evidence as a guide to human practice, will think that the particular subject of the evidence of re-

ligion can be exempted from a law so comprehensive, on account of an assumption formed in an individual mind, and by no means having, or even pretending to have, anything like that general sanction from mankind, which belongs to the law that it proposes to supersede? We need not inquire into the piety, or even the decency, of setting up, under any circumstances, an opinion of our own upon the question what the Creator ought to have done, against a communication of what He has done; because such considerations scarcely belong to the present stage of this inquiry. The case now before us is that of setting up such an opinion, founded upon a measurement which has been made, by one or more individual minds, of the universal nature of things, without any support from the general sense of mankind; nay, against what that general sense, and what even the objectors themselves, in other subject-matter, usually accept as a valid law for the discovery of truth; namely the law of probable evidence. Such a proceeding is plainly irrational. It offends against the laws of the general reason of our race.

50. But unless the objection can be carried to that point, it is worthless for the question at issue. For the matter to be examined is not whether the Revelation is in all its accompaniments, or in all its particulars, such as is thoroughly agreeable to us, exactly such as we approve, or such as we should have anticipated; but, whether or not it be a Revelation from God. According to the decision of this last-named question, it must be accepted or rejected; and there can be no reference to the prior topic, otherwise than as it may enter into the decision in what spirit we are to receive such a Revelation when its proof has been supplied. Such considerations might conceivably diminish the satisfaction with which the Gospel is acknow-

ledged to be divine, and the cheerfulness with which it is accepted. This is plainly their legitimate scope when they shall have been proved, and nothing beyond this.

51. The case would indeed be different, if the nature of the difficulty were such, that the Gospel was found to present contradictions to the moral law graven on the heart of man. There are undoubtedly principles so universally accepted and of such authority, that a demonstration of anything, be it what it may, which should overthrow them, would leave no firm resting-place in the human mind even for its own reception. It would break down the stays and pillars of all truth within us. But such is not the character of the objection we are now considering. It has not an universal acceptance. It does not relate to moral subject-matter. It is a condition laid down by some few of us as being in their view necessary to preserve a due dignity in that intellectual process, which is to be the avenue of the truth of God to the soul.

52. It is, however, perhaps not difficult to show that the objection is in itself ill-founded. It assumes that the force of the proofs ought to increase with the importance of the subject. But this is an assumption, which is wholly foreign to the law of probable evidence. That law takes no cognisance of the absolute magnitude of the propositions in question, but only of the relative likelihood of an affirmative or a negative concerning them. This proportion is equally applicable to all subject-matter, however great, or however small. The law, therefore, of credibility has no more dependence upon the magnitude of the questions tried than have the numbers on the arithmetical scale, which calculate for motes and for mountains with exactly the same propriety. At either extremity, indeed, the nature of our faculties im-

poses a limit. Practically numbers are bounded for us. We cannot employ them to count the sands of the sea-shore; nor again by any fraction can we express the infinitesimal segments, into which space is capable of being divided. And just so in the case before us. If the objection be that the proportion of affirmative and negative evidence upon any given question approaches so nearly to equality as to be indistinguishable from it, and if, when the whole elements of the case are taken into view, this can be made good as their general result, then in truth, but only then, the obligation of credibility may cease and determine.

53. But indeed the objection may even be inverted. When, as here, the matter in question is very great, the evil consequences of a contravention of the law of probability are enhanced. It is not necessary to maintain that any essential difference in the obligation to follow the apparent truth is thus produced: but it is manifest that, the larger and more serious the anticipated results, the more natural and becoming, to say the least, is it for us to realise beforehand our position and duties with regard to the question, and by a more vivid consciousness to create an enhanced and more sharply defined sense of our responsibility. So that both the danger and the guilt of refusing to apply to the evidences of religion the same laws of investigation, which we obey in all other departments of inquiry and of action, are not mitigated, but aggravated, in the degree in which it may be shown that the matter at issue transcends in its importance all those which are ordinarily presented to us.

54. Further. The most reasonable presumptions are positively adverse. If we admit that man by free will and a depraved affection fell away from God, which is the

representation addressed to us by the Gospel, nothing can be more consistent with it, than that he should be brought back to God by ways which give scope for the exercise of will and affection, and for their restoration, through exercise, to health. But surely it is plain that this scope is far more largely given, where the proof of revelation involves moral elements, and grows in force along with spiritual discernment, than if it had the rigour of a demonstration in geometry, of which the issue is accepted without any appeal, either to affection or volition, in the appreciation and acceptance of the steps of the process. And yet more specifically. If it be true that we are to be brought back, as the Gospel says, by a divine training to the image of God, if that which is crooked is to be made straight, and that which is feeble strong, by the agency of a Perfect on a fallen being, nothing can be more agreeable to our knowledge of our own state than the belief that such a process would be best conducted in the genial climate and atmosphere of a trustful mind; that reliance or faith (always being reasonable reliance or faith) in another would greatly aid our weakness; that we should thus realise in the concrete divine qualities before we can comprehend them in the abstract. But this faith essentially involves the idea of what we have called probable evidence: for it is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" and "that which a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?" *

55. It may be that, despite of all reasoning, there will be pain to many a pious mind in following, even under the guidance of Bishop Butler, the course of an argument which seems all along to grant it as possible, that the

* Heb. xi. 1.

argument in favour of the truth of Divine Revelation may amount to no more than a qualified and dubious likelihood. But as, when the net of the fisherman is cast wide, its extremity must lie far from the hand that threw it, so this argument of probability aims at including within the allegiance of religion those who are remote from anything like a *normal* faith. It is no mere feat of logical arms; it is not done in vain glory, nor is it an arbitrary and gratuitous experiment, nor one disparaging to the majesty and strength of the Gospel. The Apostle, full of the manifold gifts of the Spirit, and admitted already to the third heaven, condescended before the Athenians to the elementary process of arguing from natural evidences for the being of God. The Gospel itself alone can fit us to appreciate its own proofs in all their force. It is addressed to beings of darkened mind and alienated heart. The light of truth indeed is abundant; but the clouded and almost blinded eye can admit no more than a faint glimmering. But if even that faint glimmering be suffered to enter, it will progressively train and fit the organ, that it has entered, to receive more and more; and although at first the glory of the Lord could scarcely be discerned in a twilight little short of night itself, yet by such degrees as the growth of the capacity allows, it "shineth more and more unto the perfect day."*

56. Moreover, it is necessary to comment upon the declaration of Bishop Butler, that in numberless instances a man is called upon to act against probability, and would be thought mad if he declined it. The meaning is, that we may be bound by duty, or led by prudence, in obedience to a more comprehensive computation of good

* Acts xvii. 24.

and evil, of benefit and loss, to act in opposition to that particular likelihood which lies nearest at hand. To take an example in moral subject-matter. We are bound to avoid occasions of anger; and yet, for the vindication of truth, it may be a duty to enter into debates, which we know from experience will stir our passions more or less. If we look merely at the likelihood of that excitement, we ought to refrain: but if we look onwards to the purpose in view, it makes the other scale descend.

57. Again, in a matter of worldly prudence. The merchant hears of a valuable natural product on the coast of Africa. The chances are estimated by him to be two to one against his finding it on the first attempt; but when he finds it, the gain will repay tenfold the expense of the voyage. It may be prudent in such a man to equip and send his vessel, though the likelihood of its failure be twofold greater than the chance of its success. So that cases, which apparently depart from the law of probability, do in fact only, when we include a greater range of calculation, illustrate its comprehensiveness and universality.

58. It is a deeply important question, whether, and how far, the law of probable evidence governs the means, by which provision has been made for the determination of questions touching Christian doctrine as they may arise from time to time. This is a great controverted question of Theology, which it could not but be advantageous to discuss in the light, tranquil as it is, supplied by the philosophy of Butler. It cannot now be attempted, however well it may deserve a separate effort. For the present, it only remains to deal with a question belonging to the region of Ethics. For the doctrine of the authority of probable evidence in practical subject-matter is impugned

not only by those who require absolute certainty in lieu of it, but likewise by those, who not as just now stated, but in the wider sense of the word, permit and warrant moral action against probability. These are the teachers of what is called Probabilism.

59. Probabilism is by no means the universal or compulsory doctrine of the Roman theologians. It has been combated even by Gonzales, a Jesuit, and a General of the Order.* It is confronted by a system called Probabiliorism: which teaches that, when in doubt among several alternatives of conduct, we are bound to choose that which has the greatest likelihood of being right. And there is also in the Latin Church a rigid school of those who pass by the name of Tutiorists. These hold that even such likelihood is insufficient, and that certainty is required as a warrant for our acts. But the popular doctrine seems to be that of Probabilism. It would be wrong to assert that it is a doctrine consciously held and taught for purposes adverse to morality or honour. Without venting any such calumny, let us regard it purely in the abstract, and not as having become parasitical to a particular Church. For my own part I know not how, when it is so contemplated, to escape from the impression, that when closely scrutinised it will be found to threaten the very first principles of duty; or to deny that, if universally received and applied, it would go far to destroy whatever there is of substance in moral obligation.

60. The essence of the doctrine is, the licence to choose the less probable. Is it not, then, obvious in the first place that it overthrows the whole *authority* of probable

* Ravignan, *De l'Existence et de l'Institut des Jésuites*, p. 84.

evidence? No probabilist, it must be supposed, could adopt and urge the argument of Bishop Butler's *Analogy* for the truth of Revelation. For his opponent would at once reply by the plea that there are certain real and unsolved difficulties about the theory of religion; that these constituted a solid, even if an inferior, probability; and that he could not, on the principles of Probabilism, be blamed for vindicating the right of his natural freedom in following the negative. If the view here taken of the range and title of probable evidence be correct, it is fearful to think what must be the ultimate effects upon human knowledge, belief, and action, of any doctrine which either overthrows or saps its title to our obedience. I say the ultimate effects: for, when thought moves only within prescribed limits, a long time may elapse before the detail of a process is evolved, and it is the ultimate effect, in moral questions, which is the true effect. It would even seem as if any, who are, consciously or unconsciously, impairing the authority of probable evidence, must also, however unconsciously, be clearing the ground for the fell swoop of unbelief in its descent upon the earth.

61. Next, we are surely justified in being to the last degree suspicious of a doctrine, which sets up the liberty of man as being not only a condition of all right moral judgment, but a positive ingredient in the claim of one alternative to be preferred over another; an element of such consideration, as to give the preponderance to what would otherwise be the lighter scale. Duty, or the *deon*, is that which *binds*. Surely, if there is one idea more pointedly expressive than another of the character of the ethical teaching of Christianity, if there is one lesson more pointedly derivable than another from the contemplation of its model in our Blessed Lord, it is the idea and the lesson that we are

to deny the claim of mere human will to be a serious ground of moral action, and to reduce it to its proper function, that of freely uniting itself with the will of God. This function is one of subordination: one which manifestly it never can perform, so long as it is to be recognised as something entitled to operate in determining moral choice, and yet extrinsic and additional to, and therefore separate from, His commands.

62. Again, what can be more unnatural, not to say more revolting, than to set up any system of rights or privileges in moral action, apart from duties? How can we, without departing from our integrity before God, allege the right of our natural freedom as sufficing to counterbalance any, even the smallest likelihood that His will for us lies in a particular direction? Scripture, surely, gives no warrant for such a theory; nor the sense of Christian tradition; nor the worthier schools of heathen philosophy. Is it not hard to reconcile the bare statement of it with the common sense of duty and of honesty, as it belongs to our race at large?

63. And more. Is it possible to go thus far, without going much further? It is granted and taught, not indeed that where there is an overwhelming, yet where there is a sensible and appreciable superiority of likelihood in favour of one alternative against another, there, on account and in virtue of our inclination for that which has the weaker evidence, we may choose the latter with a safe conscience. That is to say, eliminating, or excluding from the case, that portion of likelihood which is common to both alternatives, there remains behind on the one side not a great but an appreciable probability; on the other a simple predilection; and shall the latter be declared by a system of Christian ethics to outweigh the former?

How is it possible, either, firstly, to establish the right of mere *will* to be set against presumptions of duty? or, secondly, when once that right has been arrogated, to limit, by any other than an arbitrary rule, the quantity of such presumptions of duty, which may be thus outweighed? If an ordinary inclination may outweigh so much of adverse presumption of duty, may not a bias tenfold and twentyfold stronger outweigh a little, or a good deal, more? And then, where is this slippery process to terminate? Where is the clue to this labyrinth? What will be the rights, and what the assumptions, of inclination in this matter, when it has been stimulated by the countenance of authority, and when through indulgence it has become ungovernable?

64. But, as our sense of the obligations of human relationship, though lower, is also less impaired than that of our duty towards God, let us illustrate the case by reference to this region. Will a licence to follow the less probable alternative bear examination, when it is applied to the relative obligations which unite man with man? An enemy brings me tidings that an aged parent is in prison and at the point of death, without solace or support. The same person has before deceived and injured me. It is probable that he may be doing so again: so probable that if he had communicated any piece of mere intelligence, not involving a question of conduct, it would, upon the whole, have appeared most safe not to believe the statement. Let it then even be more likely that he now speaks falsehood than truth. Will that warrant me in remaining where I am, or is it possible to treat with neglect a call which *may* reveal the want and extremity of a parent, without an evident, gross, and most culpable breach of filial obligation? The

answer would be No; and it would be immediate and universal. And yet the case here put has been one not of greater but of inferior likelihood. How then, we may ask, by the argument *à fortiori*, is it possible to apply to the regulation of our relations towards God a theory which explodes at the first instant when it is tested by a case of lower yet of just obligation, namely by perhaps the deepest among all the original instincts of our nature?

65. It is indeed true that the doctrine of Probabilism is guarded by two conditions. The first is, that it is to apply only to questions of right, not to those, as I find it expressed, where both fact and right are involved. The question of the validity of a sacrament is not to be tried by it; and "de même, un médecin est tenu de donner les remèdes les plus éprouvés, et un juge les décisions les plus sûres."* But this reservation appears rather to weaken, than to strengthen, the foundations of the doctrine itself. Is it not sometimes difficult to decide on the validity of a sacred rite? Do the judge and the physician never doubt? Why are the rules for the investigation of truth which bind them, otherwise than obligatory on other personal conduct? Is not the foundation of duty to others strictly and immutably one with the foundation of duty to our own selves? Again, obligation to a fellow-creature cannot be stronger than obligation to our Father in heaven; therefore, if the liberty of a man is a good plea against a doubtful command of God, why may it not equally warrant a doubtful wrong to a patient or a suitor? if it be good in that part of our relations to God, which embraces the immediate communion of the soul with Him, why not

* *Manuel des Confesseurs*, p. 74.

also in that other part, when the intercourse is through the medium of holy rites? It is not difficult to see that neither the Church, nor civil society, could bear without derangement the application of Probabilism to the relations between them and the individual. But then it is more than ever difficult to conceive how such a relaxation of the moral law is to be justified; and justified, moreover, in the department of conduct which is inward, in which we are our own judges, and in which therefore we may even have need to be aided against temptation by a peculiar strictness of rule.

66. The other limitation of the doctrine is, that the probability we are to follow, though inferior to that of the competing alternative, must be intrinsically a solid one: and must not be glaringly, though it may be sensibly, inferior to the opposing argument. "Quoique, comparativement à la probabilité contraire, la vôtre soit inférieure, il faut qu'elle soit, absolument parlant, grave, et solide, et digne d'un homme prudent; comme une montagne relativement à une autre peut être plus petite, mais néanmoins être en soi, et absolument, une assez grande masse pour mériter le nom de montagne."* And this doctrine is supported by the very strange reason,† that it is more easy to determine whether the probability in favour of a given alternative belong to the class of solid or of faint and inadmissible probabilities, than whether it be greater or less than the probability in favour of some other alternative. This proposition is one which requires to borrow support, rather than one which can afford to lend it. To me it has the sound of egregious paradox. However difficult it may sometimes be to com-

* *Manuel des Confesseurs*, p. 75. † *Ibid.* p. 86.

pare the reasons adducible in support of opposite alternatives, the line between them, it is evident, can rarely be finer and more hair-drawn than that which is to distinguish, in the technical and abstract order, the general traits of a faint from those of a solid probability.

67. But upon the doctrine itself let me record, in concluding, these three remarks. In the first place, the cases are innumerable in which there is evidence in favour of a given alternative, which would amount to a solid, aye a very solid probability, if it stood alone: if it were not overthrown by evidence on the opposite side. But if we are to regard it absolutely, and not relatively, we must on this account fall into constant error. Secondly: to know that our duty is to follow the safest and best alternative, is at least to possess a determinate rule, and one eminently acceptable to a sound conscience; one which gives us a single and intelligible end for our efforts, though the path of duty is not always, even for the single eye, easy to discern. It becomes a tangled path indeed, if we invoke the aid of Probabilism. For this requires the decision of at least two questions: first, whether the alternative which it is meant to follow has a solid, not a feeble, probability in its favour; secondly, whether the alternative to be discarded has a notable and conspicuous, or only a limited and moderate, superiority over it. For the step cannot, by hypothesis, be taken, until both these questions have been determined. In the third place, it is painful to recollect that when we are dealing with the most difficult parts of duty, namely those which we transact wholly within ourselves, the appetite for self-indulgence should be pampered by encouragement from without. We are already apt enough to conjure into solid probabilities the veriest phantasms of the mind,

provided only they present an agreeable appearance. Here is a new premium set upon this process, alike dangerous and alluring. The known subtlety of such mental introspections excuses many failures in those who do not create their own embarrassments; but, for those who do, such a system appears capable of colouring error, which might have been blameless, with the darker hues of wilfulness and guilt.

V.

THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT; ITS PARENTAGE, PROGRESS, AND ISSUE.*

1879.

1. The nineteenth century, I believe, was already growing old before any attempt was made to write the history of English religion, or of the Church of England, such as they had been during the eighteenth. It was even a common practice to break off all narration upon these great subjects on reaching the Revolution of 1688, as if they had then attained Nirvana, lost their individuality, and been absorbed in the unfathomable tranquillity of universal Nature. In truth, however, so far as the Reformed Church of England was concerned, its history was at this time not ending but rather beginning. The great crisis of the Reformation, which in Scotland lasted from 1560 to 1689 (if not even to 1712), covered about the same number of years in England, where it both opened and closed about one generation sooner. It began under Henry VIII., in the year 1532, under Archbishop Warham, with the Acts relating to Bulls and to First-Fruits, and it closed in 1662, upon the ejection of the two thousand ministers who were unable to comply with the Act of Uniformity. Between these two dates, and particularly from the accession of Elizabeth onwards, the

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different forces, which had combined to produce the great movement of the Sixteenth Century, were engaged in mutual conflict, and the point at issue was, whether the friends or the opponents of further steps in the direction of the Reformation should prevail.

2. The history of the Reformed Church of England, such as it is represented by the Book of Common Prayer, and by its documents and laws in general, passed through its first stage between the Restoration and the Revolution of 1688. The second stage may be said to have lasted from the Revolution to the accession of the House of Hanover. This stage was one of fluctuation and transition; not, however, as to the law and doctrine of the Church, but as to its relations with the ruling powers. The great issue then depending was, whether its position, rendered equivocal in 1689 by the doctrines of non-resistance and of a divine right in the heir of the Stuarts, was to be exchanged, on the death of Anne, for one of undivided allegiance, and of identification in spirit, as well as in form, with the ruling power.

3. This question was conclusively decided on, and by, the accession of George I. The clergy of the Anglican Church, from the date of St. Bartholomew's Day in 1662, had been a clergy very nearly homogeneous. A few individuals, such as Bishop Reynolds of Norwich, continued to represent within its borders the general shade of doctrine belonging to Puritanism, but the door was barred against intrants, and there was consequently no succession to maintain the school. Anglicanism was in possession, with a strong and nearly universal hold. Parallel and coextensive with this theology, and indeed firmly morticed into it, lay the purely political opinions, which the circumstances of the Anglican Reformation had

unhappily exalted, for practical purposes, into articles of Religion; articles which, in the minds of the clergy generally, and of a very large part of the laity, held a rank higher perhaps than some among the Thirty-nine. Just as it was not Episcopacy, but Jacobitism, which was the immediate cause of the resolution of William III. to embrace the Presbyterian cause in Scotland, so it was not Anglicanism, but it was Jacobitism, which placed the body of the English clergy, and their large lay following, in a position of permanent estrangement from the sovereigns of the House of Brunswick, and from the extraneous but powerful influences which, through the medium of Episcopal and other patronage, they, acting by their Ministers, could and did bring to bear upon the Church.

4. The standing discord thus established produced the most noteworthy, though hitherto but little noted, consequences. The two great powers of the clerical body, the Episcopal and the Presbyterial, were thrown wholly out of sympathy with one another. Except that both were tolerably well agreed on the retention of privilege, and even on resistance to Nonconformity, they came to be powers not sustaining, but neutralizing, one another. The aggregate influence of the Church upon society, which Mr. Lecky* has described as having been, at the close of the Seventeenth Century, enormous, progressively declined. Sceptical and subversive opinions in religion spread with rapidity; reaching to such a point as to draw from a mind so little exaggerative as that of Bishop Butler, the well-known description embodied in the Advertisement of his Analogy.

5. These evils, great as they were in themselves, were

* Lecky, *History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 59.

indicative of a yet deeper taint within. Lord Stanhope long ago pointed out, with much sagacity,* that, when harmony between the Bishops and their clergy had thus been destroyed, it was impossible to supply its place, and to restore a real unity, by coercion. More especially was this the case because, while the higher places in the Church were continually replenished with Hanoverian prelates, the Jacobitism of the parochial clergy was also continually fed by Jacobite appointments to the benefices. For these proceeded from a body of lay patrons, consisting of the territorial gentry, who were, in large measure, Jacobites themselves. Harmony being gone, and coercion impossible, no alternative remained for the governing power but neutrality, inaction, and religious inefficiency. The relation of the Bishop to his clergy became gradually a negative relation. Not only did the old abuses of plurality and non-residence, always parasitical to the Church of England, thrive and fatten in the stagnant atmosphere, but there was a gradual decline of the religious life, until it passed almost into general paralysis.

6. The deleterious influences, which pervaded generally the regions of the air, appear to have affected the Nonconforming sections of the community to a certain extent. We are too apt to assume that the relations of the Church and of Nonconformity are those only of rivalry, and that what the one gains the other loses. It is more probable, and the thought is surely one more congenial, that the spiritual pulse rises and falls, in the two, mainly with a common action. But the mischiefs, at which I now very slightly glance, were, if not confined to the Church, much more general, intense, and scandalous, within its borders

* *History of England*, vol. ii. pp. 369–72.

than beyond them. It was well, therefore, that from within the precinct, where the darkness lay the thickest, the light should first and most brilliantly arise.

7. These last words, it need hardly be said, refer principally, though not entirely, to John Wesley. I make no attempt in this paper to follow the career of that extraordinary man, whose life and acts have taken their place in the religious history, not only of England, but of Christendom. I only observe, first, that the course of Wesley takes its origin from the bosom of devout but high Anglicanism,* in which, as a youth, he was bred, and which long and rather obstinately, though varyingly, held its ground within his interior mind, in despite of circumstances the most adverse. Secondly, that, while having had this origin, it should still, perhaps, be regarded as having given the main impulse, out of which sprang the Evangelical movement. Thirdly, that while it imparted the main impulse, it did not stamp upon that movement its specific character. The principal share of the parentage was not represented in the particular contour of the features.

8. Probably that, which Wesley did not supply to it, is to be traced in a great degree, yet by an indirect line, to Whitfield. It would seem rather as if the Evangelical Succession, as Sir J. Stephen has called it in his Essays, may more directly have had its fountainhead in another quarter. Some rivers spring from only a group of pools; and there were a small number of clergymen, sporadically and very thinly distributed over the broad surface of the Church of England, whose names have been handed down

* See among others the latest work on the subject, Dr. Rigg's *Churchmanship of John Wesley*. 1878.

to us in conjunction with the rare phenomenon of the profession of high Calvinism, or of a leaning more or less pronounced towards it. Of these the best known are Hervey, Berridge, Romaine, and Toplady. Perhaps they are to be regarded as, along with Whitfield, the fathers of the Evangelical school. But let it not be supposed that these zealous and fervent men had a monopoly, even amidst the prevailing torpor and abounding scandals that marked the time, of fervour and of zeal. Some portion of the awakened spirit of the period went off, with Mr. Lindsey, into Unitarianism. A larger share of genuine warmth, in such forms as the Anglican Church deems especially her own, is represented in the works, as of Bishop Wilson, so of Bishop Horne and of Jones of Nayland. But these men, and all that was in harmony with them, had no connection with sect or movement of any kind, except with the standing warfare of the Spirit of God, and of all His instruments, against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

9. It ought perhaps to be remarked that, in an interesting historic sketch, the Rev. Canon Garbett has traced the origin of the Evangelical movement, and assigns it to Mr. Law and his 'Serious Call to a Holy Life.' But such an ascription seems to me incorrect. Unless it be by a circuitous derivation through Wesley, there are no positive relations that I can find between this movement and the Nonjuring party to which Law belonged; and the large and prominent development of the doctrinal element in the Evangelical writings is out of all proportion to its retired position in the works, so far as I know them, of Law. His succession is rather to be found in Bishop Wilson, in Jones of Nayland, and in Hook or Keble of our own time.

10. It may not be unreasonable, then, to regard the group of clergymen whom I have named as the spiritual fathers of the Evangelical school. The deep and sharp lines of their ultra-Calvinism, however, were softened in their successors, as, for example, in Thomas Scott, and gradually disappeared. That scheme of doctrine has more than once made its appearance in the Church of England, as, for example, in the notorious Lambeth Articles, but always with the note of sterility, the mark of the hybrid upon it. Elsewhere it has found more congenial soils, and has been associated with great results; but within the Anglican precinct it has always been a transient phenomenon.

11. The points, in which the Evangelical school permanently differed from the older and traditional Anglicanism, were those of the Church, the Sacraments, and the forensic idea of Justification. They are not, in my view, its strong points, and I no not mean to dwell upon them. Its main characteristic was of a higher order. It was a strong, systematic, outspoken, and determined reaction against the prevailing standards both of life and preaching. It aimed at bringing back, on a large scale, and by an aggressive movement, the Cross, and all that the Cross essentially implies, both into the teaching of the clergy, and into the lives as well of the clergy as of the laity. The preaching of the Gospel became afterwards a cant phrase: but that the preaching of the Gospel a hundred years ago had disappeared, not by denial, but by lapse, from the majority of Anglican pulpits, is, I fear, in large measure, an historic truth. To bring it back again was the aim and work of the Evangelical reformers in the sphere of the teaching function. Whether they preached Christ in the best manner may be another question; but

of this there is now, and can be, little question that they preached Christ; they preached Christ largely and fervently where, as a rule, He was but little and but coldly preached before. And who is there that will not say from his heart, "I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice"?

12. Thus far on the parentage, and what may be called the baptismal name, of the Evangelical movement. I now pass to its progress. The first suggestion of this paper was awakened by a passage in Mr. Lecky's 'History of England in the Eighteenth Century,' which I wish to controvert. But before controverting a particular statement, I allow myself the pleasure of rendering the tribute which justice demands to that valuable work. It may perhaps be considered a series of pictures rather than a history strictly so called; but if the thread is not one of perfect continuity, yet his presentation of scenes and characters is worthy, in more respects than one, of grateful acknowledgment. Conscientious labour, profuse information, judicious selection, happy arrangement of detail, are crowned by the paramount and rare merit of a dispassionate love of truth, and a constant effort to be faithful to that love, which have seldom been surpassed.

13. Possessed of these solid titles to our respect, Mr. Lecky, at p. 627 of his second volume, sums up as follows the operation performed by the Evangelical Clergy:

> "They infused into it (the English Church) a new fire and passion of devotion, kindled a spirit of fervent philanthropy, raised the standard of clerical duty, and completely altered the whole tone and tendency of the preaching of its ministers. Before the close of the Century, the Evangelical movement had become dominant in England, and it continued the almost undisputed centre of religious life till the rise of the Tractarian movement of 1830" (1833?).

The quality of the praise here given as to devotion, preaching, and clerical duty is not too high for the school of Newton, Cecil, Venn, Scott, and Simeon, with others, who formed the first generation of "Evangelicals" proper, or for their successors.

14. But is Mr. Lecky equally correct upon his statement as to the two matters of fact?—

(1) That, before the close of the Century, the movement was "dominant" in England.

(2) That at, or somewhere near, that period "it completely altered the whole tone and tendency of the preaching" of the clergy.

Against these two propositions, I advance with some confidence the following counter-statements:

(1) That the Evangelical movement never became, properly speaking, dominant in England; never held anything like the position, which the corresponding party held in the Established Church of Scotland at the time when the great controversy of patronage and the Veto Act began.

(2) That, without becoming dominant in this sense, it did by infusion profoundly alter the general tone and tendency of the preaching of the clergy; not, however, at the close of the last or the beginning of the present century, but after the Tractarian movement had begun, and, indeed, mainly when it had reached that forward stage at which it came rather to be known, in a loose and general way, by the name of Ritualism.

These are questions of great interest, pertaining to the history of religious thought and action in our country. They also present the advantage that they make no appeal (so far as I see) to prejudice or passion, and are therefore open to an unbiassed discussion. Accordingly, I offer no

apology for an effort to present what I take to be a tolerably just outline of the facts; the more so as my own recollections reach back with considerable freshness to all but the first twenty years of the Century, and, indeed, embrace in some degree a few of the later among those twenty years.

15. I apprehend, then, that until the close of the reign of George III. the Evangelical clergy were a small and, it might even be said, a numerically inconsiderable minority of the whole clerical body. In an attempt to estimate their strength, precision is not attainable; but I believe it would be within the mark to say they did not exceed one in twenty, if they touched that proportion. In activity and moral influence, they counted for a good deal more. The vessels of zeal and fervour, taken man for man, far outweighed the heroes of the ball-room and the hunting-field, or the inert, half-animated minds, and perfunctory performers of a minimum of stipulated duty, who supplied so considerable a number of the clerical host.

16. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the massive learning, which never wholly deserted the Church, and the preponderating share of purely intellectual force, were never theirs, and perhaps were not in all cases adequately valued among them. Nor did they possess the important element of high clerical station; for, in the distribution of the greater preferments, they not only had less than their proportion, but might even be said to be unjustly proscribed. The first and, until the days of the Sumners, the only bishop who was reckoned with the party was Dr. Ryder, of Lichfield. His piety, dignity, kindliness, and moderation of mind rendered him well worthy of the honours of the prelacy; but possibly these

did not contribute more to lift him over the bar than his noble birth, and his being the brother of a Cabinet Minister. Any deans, canons, or heads of houses of that epoch, who were held to wear the same colours, might readily be counted on the fingers.

17. Among the beneficed clergy, whether of town or country, the Evangelical teachers were thinly scattered. They increased, however, pretty rapidly in numbers; and I think the entire body was roughly estimated, before the close of the reign of George IV., at fifteen hundred, or about one-eighth of the whole clergy. The foundation of their religious Societies had greatly contributed to give them the organization of a party. Their union was doubtless consolidated by the prejudice under which they lay with the bulk both of the clergy, and of those who termed themselves the laity; as also by the vehement and absurd modes, in which this prejudice occasionally found vent. They had in their congregations a zealous, liberal, and efficient following: but these congregations constituted a kind of sect within the Church of England: they were the *devôts*, the *bacchettoni*, the "saints," of the land.

18. Let me now endeavour to sustain, as far as the nature of the case allows, the first counter-proposition I have laid down, by reference to the degree of their extension at various local centres during the reign of George IV. In the University of Oxford, about 1830, they could hardly be said to subsist, except in the persons of some four or five scattered individuals of the teaching or officiating body. There was, indeed, an ecclesiastical centre in the parish of St. Ebb's, under the Rev. Mr. Bulteel (a man of some note in his day), where the flame was at white heat; and a score or two of young men, who felt its attraction, nestled together in the small establishment of St. Edmund

Hall—known during the last century as the home of the six students so harshly and discreditably expelled. But these youths belonged to a school of ultra-Calvinism, which lay far in advance of the ordinary Evangelical tenets. Of those tenets there was in 1830 an admirable representative in the person of Mr. Waldo Sibthorp, Fellow of Magdalen, lately deceased. This excellent preacher and devout, refined, and attractive man was destined in his own person to feel the conflict of the tidal currents and to exemplify the religious vicissitudes of the age. Thrice he cleared the chasm which lies between the Anglican and Roman Churches, but never, I believe, was visited with an uncharitable word, or raised any other emotion, in persons who observed or knew him, than those of affection and respect. But his representation of the Evangelical party in Oxford was an almost solitary representation.

19. In Cambridge, led by Mr. Simeon, it had something more. The vein, though rather a narrow vein, ran through the academic body; whereas in nearly every college of Oxford it was a thing unknown, except by hearsay. Mr. Simeon resembled Mr. Sibthorp, who was greatly his junior, in his pure and venerable character. He was, however, endowed with a greater energy, and a strong organizing faculty; and he used his liberal fortune with abundant sagacity, and extraordinary effect, in opening the way for his followers, through the purchase of advowsons, to benefices in the large towns. The possession of these seats of power immensely extended their parochial influence, and the number of his academic partisans was considerable among the young. They passed, however, by the name of Simeonites, and formed but a fraction of the mass.

20. Even this slight outline of the case, as it concerns

the two Universities, may suffice to show that in point of numbers, or material extension, the Evangelical movement was as far as possible from being dominant, not only at the close of the last century, but after a further and very important growth through the thirty years following its expiration, and down to the very eve of the time when there arose in the Tractarian movement what proved to be both, as some might say, its most formidable adversary, and some, its unnatural and matricidal child. For Oxford and Cambridge, taken together, still tell in a paramount manner, and half a century ago told almost conclusively, the tale of the whole country, so far as the colour and character of its clergy were concerned.

21. But I will turn to some other quarters; and first to the Metropolis. It may, I think, be stated, without fear of contradiction, that during the first third-part of this century not a single London parish, west of Temple Bar, was in the hands of the Evangelical party. Islington in the north had Mr. Daniel Wilson for its vicar; but it appears that he came to it as it were accidentally, through the private exercise of the right of patronage in his family. St. John's Chapel in Bedford Row, Percy Chapel, Margaret Chapel, Long Acre Chapel, and the Chapel of the Lock Hospital in Grosvenor Place, were the centres of this religious influence which I best recollect, and doubtless there were a few others; but these were all proprietary chapels, and those who attended them were more or less marked men.

22. Passing from the Metropolis to the provinces, I take the case of Liverpool, with which I am best acquainted. Only in one single church, I think, of that town and neighbourhood, namely at Everton, a north-eastern suburb, was an Evangelical minister (the Rev.

Mr. Buddicom) installed, until my own father introduced two more—one at St. Andrew's, Renshaw Street, about 1816, and one at Seaforth, five miles to the northward, about a couple of years earlier. The case of the towns generally was not, I believe, widely different, though in some of them, such as Carlisle, Hull, Huddersfield, Leicester, and perhaps most of all Cheltenham, the movement had a wider and deeper basis. Liverpool itself subsequently underwent a great change, mainly through the influence of the late Dr. Macneile, an eloquent and most finished preacher, and an able, resolute, and upright man. I will not now refer to minor centres, such as Eton and Windsor, or Gloucester, or Wilmslow in Cheshire, and the respective neighbourhoods, with which circumstances gave me an acquaintance. But I may mention that in the reign of George IV. there was not, within the precinct of the great school of Eton, or, I believe, of any other of the principal public schools, any trace of the religious influence of the Evangelical party.

23. What has now been said is, I believe, enough to show the true position of the Evangelical movement in the country at large. I have not mentioned Wales. Its case was different, and was mainly governed, at the time I speak of, by Nonconforming influences. But I apprehend it would rather strengthen my position. Neither have I referred to the Established Church of Ireland. Within that body the movement made, if not an earlier, a greater progress than in England, and was stimulated by the highly polemical, as well as political, nature of the attitude unhappily forced upon it. But its quality was not quite the same; and its aggregate influence upon the larger, and more eminent and learned, Church was then so small, as to be scarcely appreciable.

24. Of course I no not mean that all which was not under the Evangelical *mot d'ordre* was in sharp antagonism with it. For example, Bishops Barrington of Durham, Porteus of London, and Burgess of Salisbury, were, like Bishop Horne and Jones of Nayland at an earlier date, men who had in them many elements kindred with it. But the party, as a party, whatever else it may have been, was the very reverse of dominant. It was active, useful, respected, healthy, and thriving; but it was also repressed and struggling, and in some sense rebellious. There was, with all its real and beneficial excellences, a latent antagonism in its scheme to express and important portions of the authoritative documents of the Church of England Over and above any positive contrarities of this kind, there was impressed upon it, probably of necessity from the circumstances of its origin, a peculiar bias towards what may be called individualism in religion. The perception of this bias has tempted some to say, as the result of their experience, that they have found more Churchmanship, more inward sense of the personal obligations entailed by belonging to a given religious society, among Nonconformists, or among the Presbyterians of Scotland, than in the average members of the Evangelical body; to which, nevertheless, the Church of England at large is so profoundly and vitally indebted for having roused her from her slumbers, and set her vigorously about her work.

25. There is yet one other test, however, which I will employ for showing the position of this section of the Church. It is the test furnished by relation to the comparatively ancient Church societies, which have each now nearly completed their two centuries; the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Society for the

Propagation of the Gospel. In the direction of these societies, the Evangelical clergy, at the period of which I speak, had not the smallest share. Nor was this all. One of them—the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge—was considered to supply the orthodox popular literature of the Church for the children of the Church. It was a body considered to speak for the Church, and this so generally that, along with the bishops and clergy generally, it bore upon its lists of subscribers the names, in their day, of the two Wesleys, and, again, those of the Evangelical leaders known as the Clapham Sect. Let us now see in what light, according to the tenour of this orthodox literature, the Evangelical clergy were exhibited to the body of their countrymen.

26. In the reign of George IV. the Society had on the register of its publications three "Dialogues between a Minister of the Church and his Parishioner," the third of which was "concerning those who are called Gospel Preachers, or Evangelical Ministers." In the second Dialogue the parishioner, who bears the modest name of John Twilight, had humbly asked what he was to do if his clergyman were really to teach heresies and errors. The answer is that the case would be a very hard one, but (p. 24), says the pastor, "It very seldom happens, because in this pure (!) church establishment it seldom can; and therefore that question is a question of curiosity, not of edification, and should not have come from you at all, good friend."

27. Having thus administered a premonitory buffet to poor Twilight, the clergyman finds, in the third Dialogue, that the said Twilight (p. 5) did not at all like his "discoursing"; did not consider he preached the Gospel, and told him how "Mr. B." had said—

"There were very few gospel preachers among parish ministers nowadays, only here and there one."

Hereupon the pastor sets forth in glowing terms the merits of the clergy, and asks John whether it is likely any men could believe such a clergy did not preach the Gospel, if "sound in their senses or *clear of any unrighteous designs.*" Such, however, were "the famous Mr. Whitfield and the well-known Wesley" (p. 7); "as you may see in almost every page of their disgusting Journals; books that are stuffed with more profane and shocking things, John, *than I ever saw in the worst of infidel books.*"

28. As might be expected, the teacher obtains an easy victory over the simple-minded John Twilight, who soon becomes amenable to reason. He is now called upon to observe the interested motives of these Gospel preachers. The parish clergyman derives emolument only from the parish (query, or parishes?) in which he may be called to minister. But the Gospel preachers went from place to place "deluding the simple flock" (p. 26).

"To spoil them of their fleece, and feast upon their fatness at pleasure. We must, however, always beware of imputing bad motives" (p. 27).

But, quoth John, very appositely, "It is not uncharitable, I think, sir, to believe what a man says of himself."

"Certainly not," replies the minister.

Now mark John's reply.

"Well then, I have observed, sir, that Mr. B. and all the gospel preachers that I ever heard are always telling us what *great sinners* they are; aye, and the very worst of sinners, and guilty of every kind of wickedness you can name. Now, sir, I certainly have no reason to *disbelieve* them, for they know themselves better than I

do. On the contrary, I have now, since you have opened my eyes, very good reason indeed to believe them. Nay, since they declare to me that they are the vilest sinners, *I shall now be a fool if I do not suspect them of the vilest crimes*, and so be upon my guard.

"Minister.—You get an acute reasoner, John. You certainly press them hard upon this point; but I must say fairly and justly."

It cannot be necessary to go beyond this citation.*

29. The three tracts were the work of the Rev. Thomas Sykes, vicar of Guilsborough. That publications so scandalous should have been elevated to a place of authority in the practical teaching of the Church is truly marvellous. We cannot be surprised to find that they did not continue to hold their place there long, after the faint beginnings of improvement once came to be perceptible in the Church. The editions from which I have quoted are dated in 1823. In the year 1829 the tracts had lost their place on the working Register, and had found it on a secondary List: a convenient kind of limbo, into which were gathered, as "out of print," productions which for any reason it was not thought fit any longer to assume the responsibility of circulating. But I think enough has been done to show to how prevailing an extent the Evangelical clergy were still a despised and a proscribed body in the view of the orthodox "public opinion" of their day. I say the public opinion, because this was no merely clerical proscription. The laity, or the world in general, spoke and acted in the same spirit, so far as, with regard to religion, they spoke or acted at all.

30. While the Evangelical clergy were in this ill odour with the ruling party in the Church, a change was taking

* Those curious to consult the work, now rare, may do well also to refer to p. 47.

place in the clerical body at large, which we cannot doubt was due, in part at least, to their influence. Beyond the precinct of the school, the number of clergymen who were in earnest about their profession, and whose life betrayed on the surface no sort of inconsistency with it, was increasing during the reigns of George IV. and the first years of William IV. I have heard persons of great weight and authority, such as Mr. Grenville, and also, I think, Archbishop Howley, ascribe the beginnings of this change, and of a reviving seriousness in the upper classes of lay society, to a reaction against the horrors and impieties of the first French Revolution in its later stages.

31. The nature of the Evangelical movement was not, probably, well calculated to fit its agents for exercising social influence at large. It had a code with respect to amusements, which was at once rigid and superficial. This code inflexibly proscribed certain of the forms in which the worldly spirit loves to work, while it left ample room for others not less charged with poison, and perhaps more insidious. In lay life generally, it did not ally itself with literature, art, and general cultivation; but it harmonized very well with the money-getting pursuits. While the Evangelical clergyman was, almost of necessity, a spiritual and devoted man, the Evangelical layman might be, and sometimes was, the same; but there was in his case far more room for a composition between the two worlds, which left on him the mark of exclusiveness, and tended to a severance from society, without securing an interior standard of corresponding elevation. But it seems probable, if not almost certain, that the interfusion of a class of men like the Evangelical clergy with the clerical body at large, must have powerfully rebuked the gross inconsistencies of professional character,

and have operated, with the force of a widely diffused example, in raising what was the prevailing, and threatened to become the traditional, standard.

32. At any rate, I can quote the evidence on this head of a witness whose competency will be admitted. It was, I think, in or before the year 1835, that I met Mr. Sydney Smith for the first time at the table of Mr. Hallam, in the house on the west side of Wimpole Street, which has become historical through the strains of *In Memoriam*. After dinner Mr. Sydney Smith was good enough to converse with me, and he spoke, not of any general changes in the prevailing tone of doctrine, but of the improvement which had then begun to be remarkable in the conduct and character of the clergy. He went back upon what they had been, and said, in his vivid and pointed way of illustration, "Whenever you meet a clergyman of my age, you may be quite sure he is a bad clergyman." He must then have been over sixty, but under sixty-five. In describing the character of his era, he could afford this good-humoured self-condemnation; for in truth, as the pastor of a parish, he appears to have shown a manly earnestness for practical purposes, which, if it did not rise alarmingly high, yet was greatly in advance of the time.

33. We have now reached the epoch, when the "Tracts for the Times" were born. It must not be supposed that, because they took their origin from Oxford, they partook at the outset of the authority or other advantages belonging to an ancient and famous University. It was an obscure birth; a birth, so to speak, in a "hole and corner" of the crowded Academic palaces. But a handful of men, and only a single Professor, were concerned in them. It is a curious incident of their production that it seems to have been due to alarm inspired by an operation strictly

political, namely, to the demolition, by the Irish Church Temporalities Act in 1833, of nearly one half of the Established Irish Episcopate. But the purpose of these pages is concerned with the Anglo-Catholic or Tract movement only at the point or points, where it touches the path of the movement known as Evangelical. And principally I wish to notice the fact, which I take to be unquestionable, that since the date of the Tracts—*since* and not before it—the juice and sap of the Evangelical teaching has in a very remarkable manner coursed through "the natural gates and alleys of the body" of the English Church. I mean by its juice and sap, the positive and not the negative part of its teaching. And its positive part was surely its core and substance.

34. The Evangelical movement had, however, a negative as well as a positive part. We have nothing to do, at present, with the orthodoxy of the sacramental teaching in the Anglo-Catholic theology. But it was an established standard: and to this standard the Evangelical teaching can hardly be thought, by any of its adherents, to have altogether conformed. We cannot be so inobservant of the laws of action and reaction in human thought as to suppose that teaching, or any other, to have been framed upon a perfect model. The good, which in this world is employed to cure great and inveterate evils, commonly brings in its company incidental defects or evils of its own. There can hardly be a question that the Evangelical teaching in the Establishment with respect to the Church and the Sacraments fell below the standard of the Prayer Book, or the Articles, or both. Indeed, an ingenuous confession to this effect is to be found in the Lectures of Mr. Simeon. This was strictly a negative part of the Evangelical scheme; and it did not, indeed it could not,

pass into the general strain of practical instruction in the Anglican Church. But it is hardly too much to say that all its other parts have been appropriated by the Church of England at large, and have also been greatly and beneficially developed.

35. It was common, in my early days, for morality to be taught without direct derivation from, or reference to, the Person of Christ. It was still more common that, if the method of the Gospel for our salvation from sin and its penalties was the theme, it was dealt with as a sort of joint-stock transaction, to which man was to contribute repentance and faith as conditions previous, and thereupon God would mercifully grant on His part all that we stood in need of. Whether or not this was a doctrine absolutely false I do not now inquire; but it was surely, at the least, a very false method of presenting the true. It gave to the great saving operation of the Gospel of grace the air of a bargain in a shop, in which we hand a coin across the counter, and get a commodity in return. The dogmatic relation of faith and works, in the system of the Church of England, remains what it was; but the logomachies and false oppositions have been got rid of, and it hardly ever happens now to hear the question of justification, once so terrible, treated in our pulpits as one which need divide us. Is not the great reason of this that our professional teachers have learned, and have become used, to ascend from the theme of justification to the yet greater and higher theme of the Justifier, and to take the setting forth of Him in His Person, life, and work, as the source and substance, not less than the model, of our life; as their never-ceasing, never-wearying task, the perpetual office of the Church on earth, corresponding with her perpetual offering of praise in heaven.

36. In this great and cardinal business, without doubt, the Evangelical preachers of the English Church were not innovators, but restorers. They were restorers, not by re-enactment of laws which had been repealed, but by revived attention to laws which had been neglected or forgotten. That their restoration was perfect, that it distorted nothing, added nothing, above all, that it curtailed nothing, I do not say. But they were in the main restorers; and all the followers and preachers of the later movement, who so largely profited by their labours, accepted those labours not as discovery, and not as innovation, but as part of a restoring work, which, as they declared, it was their aim to complete.

37. *Which it was their aim to complete.* I do not mean to say that the founders of the Oxford school announced, or even that they knew, to how large an extent they were to be pupils and continuators of the Evangelical work, besides being something else. They were, indeed, at first that something else so seriously and effectually that they seemed to be that something exclusively. Their distinctive speech was of Church and Priesthood, of Sacraments and Services, as the vesture, under the varied folds of which the form of the Divine Redeemer was to be exhibited to the world; in a way capable of, and suited for, transmission by a collective body, from generation to generation. It may well have happened that, in straining to secure for their ideas what they thought their due place, some, at least among their disciples, may have forgotten or disparaged that personal and experimental life of the human soul with God, which profits by all ordinances but is tied to none, dwelling ever, through all its varying moods, in the inner court of the sanctuary, whereof the walls are not built with hands. The only

matter, however, with which I am now concerned is to record the fact that the pith and life of the Evangelical teaching, as it consists in the reintroduction of Christ our Lord to be the woof and warp of preaching, was the great gift of the movement to the teaching Church, and has now penetrated and possessed it on a scale so general that it may be considered as pervading the whole mass.*

38. I proceed to consider some incidental topics, which associate themselves with that weighty fact.

Upon the face of the case as thus presented, there comes a kind of presumption that the Evangelical movement may have stood in some relation of parentage to the Tractarian. But if so, it was hardly a conscious or voluntary parentage; for the Evangelical party, as a party, joined, though on very different grounds, with the outer world, in utterly condemning the Tractarian movement from the first, as heartily as the clergy of the eighteenth century had joined with that same world in condemning the teaching of Wesley or of Whitfield. That withered clergy did not know how, within a century, much of the teaching they reviled would be transfused and filtered into the working system of their successors, and would, so to speak, integrate their own defective methods. Can there have been anything analogous to this in the relations between the Evangelical and the Tractarian movements?

39. There is often, in the courses of this wayward and bewildered life, exterior opposition, and sincere and even violent condemnation, between persons or bodies who are nevertheless profoundly associated by ties and relations that they know not of. Whitfieldism on the one hand,

* In support of the view expressed in this and the preceding sections, I refer the reader to the able Address of Dr. Rigg before the Victoria Institute in 1878, p. 9.

and the clericalism of the eighteenth century on the other, knew one another simply as systems repelling and excluding one another. They knew not how profoundly there was set in each that which would draw to and assimilate with the other. They knew it no more than two pieces of cork floating on a basin of water, which first imperceptibly steal towards one another, and then by attraction come rapidly to touch. Logical continuity and moral causation are stronger than the conscious thought of man; they mock it, and play with it, and constrain it, even without its knowledge, to suit their purposes.

40. In these pages I have dealt partly with a matter of fact; namely, the existence of a great revival of what may roughly be called Gospel-preaching in the English Church, extending far beyond the limits of school or party, and (in general terms) covering the whole field. And partly I have had to deal with a cause; for I have assigned the causation of this most happy change to the Evangelical movement. Thus far I pay it not only an unmixed honour, but one which its adherents will be under no temptation to question. The scene changes when I add the surmise that, in the great historic order, which Providence directs, there may have been some further unseen relation between Evangelicalism and Tractarianism. I cannot attempt to define it, and I admit that the statement seems to carry something of the aspect of paradox. But all human systems produce much that they do not aim at producing. There is causation by parentage; and there is also causation by the way of opposition and reaction. The friends of these two systems upon the whole viewed one another with marked disapproval; and while the one was known almost for an idolatry of the Reformers, parts of whose works were reproduced by Mr.

Legh Richmond as those of the "Fathers of the Church," on the other hand the disposition of the Tractarians—may it not be said, their besetting sin—was to undervalue and disparage these same Reformers: a disposition of which, in the case of the Remains of Mr. R. H. Froude, published by two of the authors of the Tracts, we have a glaring if not almost a scandalous instance. It is, however, pretty plain that if the Evangelical partisan—for such persons there must inevitably be—accepts with complacency the praise of having altered and improved the preaching of the English Church at large, the fruit of this eulogy may turn to ashes in his mouth when he encounters the suggestion that there may have been other relations, besides those of pure antagonism, between the Evangelical and the Tractarian movements.

41. He will reply, and reply with justice, that he—I mean now the collective he—pronounced anathema on the Tractarian movement from the first, and predicted what the movers themselves steadily denied, that its real goal and full accomplishment were to be found only in Romanism, which could not fail to reap the harvest it was busily engaged in sowing. My object, however, is not to minister to the predilections of mere partisans of whatever class, but to contribute, if it be but one grain in weight, to the truth of history. Nor is it his susceptibilities only that, unintentionally and reluctantly, I may wound. If impartiality require the exhibition of a relation between Evangelicalism and the genesis of the Tractarian movement, it cannot halt at this point, but must proceed to indicate a relation between Tractarianism and the most remarkable group, or rather train, of secessions from the Church of England to the Church of Rome, which have been known since the epoch of the reformation. In both cases alike,

the relation will be repudiated with sincerity and zeal; but it may nevertheless exist.

42. There are manifestly distinctions to be drawn between them, and especially this distinction. Tractarianism was a movement obviously in the direction of the Church of Rome; Evangelicalism was a movement not obviously in the direction of Tractarianism. But this question of direction, or, so to speak, of the point of the compass, neither decides, nor even helps towards the decision of, the main issue, as may be shown by a score of instances. The Swiss Reformation, and indeed the Reformation generally, cut away portions of the teaching of the Latin Church: Socinus and Ochino cut away these, and others with them: so the Reformation may be called a movement in the direction of Socinianism. Nonconformity rejected portions of the Common Prayer Book. Is it on this account to be subjected to a like imputation? Hampden moved in the direction of Cromwell, Lafayette in the direction of Robespierre; but Hampden is not responsible for the execution of Charles I., nor Lafayette for the Reign of Terror. Generally the partisans of constitutional monarchy move away from despotism in the direction of anarchy; but, instead of being anarchists, they are those, as we English hold, who build by far the firmest barriers against disorder. It is often the resisting, not the attacking, party which is responsible for the most destructive consequences of the assault. Let us be cautious in our inferences; let us be sound in our facts. Let us know that our effects really have been effected, before we proceed to inquire into their causes.

43. What appears as matter of fact to be quite undeniable is, firstly, that the Tractarian party, or the Oxford school, was very powerfully reinforced from the Evangelical ranks.

Of the three great authors of the Tracts, Mr. Keble was the only one belonging to the school of traditional Anglican theology. Cardinal Newman, when driven to write his *Apologia*, added to British literature a gem, that must always shine brightly among its treasures. In this fascinating work, he frankly disclosed the close spiritual associations between Evangelical doctrine and feeling, and the foundations of his religious life. His brother English Cardinal, the official head of the Latin Church in England, had belonged in the strictest sense to the ranks of the party. Enumeration need not be carried downwards; it might, as to the less prominent among the living, seem invidious, and there is no doubt about the abundance of instances.

44. Equally undeniable is it that the Church of England has supplied her Roman relative during our time, and especially between 1840 and 1850, with an unrivalled band of recruits. A pamphlet recently printed, under the title of "Rome's Recruits," enumerates about three thousand. Of these several hundreds were clergymen; and persons of title are also numerous. Some of these seceders were persons brought for the first time under strong religious influences. Some cases may have been simply due to personal idiosyncrasies; some to a strong reaction from pure unbelief; some came from Presbyterianism, the merest handful from Nonconformity, or, on the other side, from the old-fashioned Anglican precinct, represented by men like Archbishop Howley, Bishop Blomfield, or Dr. Hook. Very many, and especially among women, made the change through what may be called pious appetite, without extended knowledge or careful inquiry. But there was a large, and, still more, an important class, not included within any of these descriptions; principally

clerical, but not without a lay fraction, made up of men competent in every way by talent, attainment, position, character, to exercise a judgment, which judgment they did exercise in general to their own heavy temporal prejudice. The secession of this body of men is a conspicuous event, of the first order in the Anglican religious history of a very remarkable time. It is matter of importance, to inquire, what persons are responsible, and what system is responsible, for this result. From more than one point of view, it can hardly be regarded as other than a serious disaster, inasmuch as it has sharpened the outlines and heightened the pretensions of Romanism not less decidedly, than it thinned the regimental forces of the Anglican system, and for a time utterly disparaged, if it did not destroy, its credit.

45. I am not of course about to deny that the bulk of the most distinguished clergy and others, who passed over into the Church of Rome between 1840 and 1860, were reputed Tractarians at the period when they proceeded to make the spring across the chasm. And therefore it has been said, and will be said again, Tractarianism was the cause of the change. It was a case of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. But Mr. Cobden once said, during the controversy on the Corn Law, "we must look into the cause of our distress; and into the causes of that cause." So, if we detect in Tractarianism the parent of the Romeward movement, and if we drive home the charge by showing that most of those who moved to Rome were Tractarians, we cannot stop here. The seed, which sprang up in the fullest-blown developments of the Latin Church, had itself been shed by some anterior plant: and what was that plant? Was it the very movement, which had so enlivened the action of the English Church? Was it the attempt

to work the scheme and system of Evangelical opinions under the conditions of the Prayer Book and the Act of Uniformity, of an episcopal, traditional, and historical Church, and of an ecclesiastical law, which, be it remembered, is at this moment the pre-Reformation law, except in the points in which it has been expressly altered by competent authority? Was it the scheme which may even be said to claim Whitfield and his school for its grandparent, but which at any rate stands in a filial relation to the highly-honoured names of Newton, the Milners, Simeon, Scott, and Venn? The scheme, too, which draws perhaps the highest of all its distinctions from its close association with the pure and saintly character, and the noble career, of Mr. Wilberforce?

46. I do not believe that this question admits of any answer which shall be unqualified, and shall also be consistent with the truth. Causation, in the movements of the human mind, is not a thing single and simple. It is a thing continuous but latent; a thing hard to trace, sometimes baffling us altogether, and at best capable only of being detected here and there, and exhibited by general indications. But there is a general indication which, as far it goes, is unquestionable, since it stands upon the solid ground of fact. It is this, that among the leading minds associated with the Romeward movement an overruling proportion, in weight if not in number, were supplied by those who had previously served, and generally whose religious life and experience had begun, in the Evangelical camp. We have, presumably at least, saddled upon Tractarianism the parentage of that secession generally, because so many of those who "went to Rome" were Tractarians. How can the Evangelical scheme escape a trenchant and prior responsibility, "once removed" if it appears that

most of the leading persons who thus ended their theological and experimental travels at the Vatican were men, the buddings of whose religious life had been in form and colour Evangelical?

47. I have already spoken of the two distinguished heads—the official and the moral head, so to speak—of the Anglo-Roman communion in England. I have disclaimed enumeration generally, as it might be invidious; but it can hardly be invidious to speak of the dead in this connection, where nothing is in question but the right exercise of judgment, and no breath of moral taint is to be breathed upon a single reputation. Among these dead, the very names will speak in a great measure for themselves. There are, for example, upon the record the names of Sibthorp, Ryder, Simeon, Dodsworth; and above all Wilberforce, for three out of the four sons of Mr. Wilberforce passed over into the Roman communion. Among the laity I may add, as standing in the same category, my friend James Robert Hope, better known as Hope-Scott, a man of the most distinguished gifts and the highest strain of character, in company with whom, and at the risk of rustication, I twice when an undergraduate attended the Baptist chapel at Oxford, once to hear Dr. Chalmers, and once to hear Mr. Rowland Hill. The persons whom I have named, dead and living, were not to be regarded as solitary cases: they were mostly typical and normal, as well as senior, men; men, as I conceive, the most typical and normal to be found among the seceders. They drew scores, aye, hundreds of others in their train; and of all these leaders it must be said that, as they proceeded from Oxford (so to speak) to Rome, so they had already marched from Clapham to Oxford.

48. Such facts as these, though mostly the records of moral martyrdoms, may be spoken of without indelicacy

and without restraint. When we proceed to reason upon causes, it must be in a different strain. We are probably too near the events for any complete elucidation. Perhaps a common caveat may be entered, and a common defence likewise urged, validly, up to a certain point, in the two cases. The *caveat* will be, that in the final resort every system must be judged by its own inward conformity to the laws of truth and reason, not by the mode in which it is handled and applied by individual minds, liable, even in the highest instances, both to patent and to hidden forms of error. And it may be said with truth, by way of defence, that for one clergyman who became Tractarian, twenty or fifty remained Evangelical, and that for one Tractarian who became Roman, twenty or fifty remained Tractarian. Candour, however, compels a certain amount of deduction from this defence; for in the years from 1840 to 1860, if the numbers were full twenty to one, it cannot be said that the weight and force were divided in a proportion so overwhelming.

49. Both the cases may perhaps be found by some to lie under a common and sweeping condemnation. Both systems, it may be said, created instincts, and stimulated longings, with they could not satisfy. The Evangelical movement filled men so full with the wine of spiritual life, that larger and better vessels were required to hold it. The Oxford school, in constructing a scheme of external usage and of Church authority, forgot that the little piece of mechanism thus elaborated for use within the limited range of the Anglican body, would of a surety gravitate more or less towards the huge mass of the Latin Church, lying before, and behind, and all around it. Our Nonconforming friends seem, it must be admitted, in a condition from their point of view to admonish both in

magisterial tones. "This is what we have always said: your semi-reformed Church, with her inconsistent laws and institutions all bound up together, is always on the downward gradient which descends to Rome. We teach Evangelical doctrine liberated from such associations, and consequently, as you see, Rome gathers no booty from our homesteads; you teach it in a Church of succession and priesthood, and from among you she makes captives at her will."

50. Of twenty-five parts, into which the population of England and Wales may be divided, one is Roman and twenty-four are anti-Roman. Of the remaining or twenty-fifth section more, probably, than three-fourths are Irish, by birth, or by manners and associations, and live in a sphere, which in a measure lies apart from the general community. Of the ninety-six per cent. who are opposed to Rome, a large part will utterly condemn any system which, to their eye, resembles the Roman one, and the whole will unanimously admit the condemnation as against any system which can be shown, by an irrefragable connection of logic and feeling, to carry its votaries into the Roman precinct. This condemnation, on this ground, has for fifty years been unequivocally pronounced by the Evangelical school on the Oxford school, and it is echoed by large numbers, perhaps by a majority, of the population. But if, as we have found, Oxford was only the posting-house, where the most eminent and powerful of the seceders slept on their journey towards Rome, the question will arise, What is to be said of the place from which that journey had begun, and how can the starting-point be exempted from a share in the same condemnation, which lights upon the halting-place? The fact seems to stand immovably that

it was not Hooks, or Kebles, or Williamses,* but Newmans, Mannings, and Wilberforces, who organized and led the host, so considerable alike in numbers, learning, and devotion, and who converted no small share of the most attached children of the English Church into her most determined and, in many cases, her fiercest, foes.

51. It is quite true that, while the Evangelical school of the last generation was rearing its choicest specimens for transplantation into the gardens of the Oxford movement, it was in a less degree, yet unequivocally, training other minds, which were afterwards to deviate from its own lines in more or less negative directions.

"Sic vos non vobis nidificatis aves."

But this fact in no degree invalidates the presumptions, which have here been suggested. It is an incident of familiar occurrence that one and the same impulse, acting upon minds differently constituted, and combining with the forces respectively latent in each of them, will give rise to the most widely divergent movements. It was thus that the secession of Cardinal Newman, a memorable event in Anglican Church history, acted upon the greatest number of his followers by attraction Romewards, but generated in other cases a strong antagonistic revulsion from his own frame of religious thought and feeling. Evangelicalism in the English Church, beneficial as an impulse and a moral example, was, when considered as a system, incomplete and abnormal. It did not represent the whole of Anglicanism, or indeed any other whole.

* The Rev. Isaac Williams, author of *The Cathedral*, and of well-known Commentaries; a close associate of the authors of the Tracts, and, I understand, a sharer in their composition.

It dislodged the centre of gravity; and found no point for it to rest in. Hence it has not had, and in truth it hardly could have, what can with any strictness be called a theology. For penetrating and exacting minds, it raises questions to which it can furnish no replies. When each man had to seek those answers for himself, and according to the measure of his own constitution, it was natural that they should be obtained in different senses, and in senses negative as well as positive. But the deeply religious nature of the movement seems to have carried this consequence, that the positive greatly predominated over the negative results.*

52. The statements of fact in these pages are, of course, open to question; but, I believe, most of the particulars, and the general colour of the whole, will not be denied. The observations and inferences have, however, been offered, not dogmatically, and not as indications of any particular leanings of my own in one direction or another, but with what I may term academic freedom, as provocatives of thought, and as contributions towards a discussion which, in whatever direction it may ultimately verge, deeply concerns the future welfare of this land. In the few observations, with which I have to conclude this fragmentary production, I may venture to express more definitely formed opinions.

53. An important yet, in view of greater issues, a minor branch of this discussion suggests the inquiry whether the divisions of thought, practice, and tendency, now existing in the Church of England, may not materially hasten her removal from that station of civil privilege, which she still holds under the steady protest of the Nonconformists gener-

* This paragraph has been added in the reprint.

ally, more and more united as they are from year to year in founding their Nonconformity upon the unlawfulness of State Establishments, as a primary and leading principle. A far larger and deeper problem is, of course, presented to us when we inquire, in connection with these differences, what front the Christianity of the country, and especially the great Anglican Communion, is to present to the disintegrating movement, which, however premature in its songs of triumph over Christianity, has undoubtedly made a progress which some years ago would have seemed incredible, in the business of sapping the foundations of belief in individual minds. I think that, as among those within the Church of England, some obvious inferences arise from what has been said. And this particularly. If there has been anything of historical and logical connection, such as has here been glanced at, between the growth of the Evangelical and the genesis of the Tractarian movements, the mother ought to look with considerable charity on the aberrations of the child.

54. It seems hard to deny that the Nonconformist, when he compares himself with the Evangelical teacher, has reason to claim for his system the credit of greater cohesion and consistency. It must be plain, however, to the serious and candid observer of our religious history that, though Evangelicalism as a system may have been eminently narrow and inconsequent, it was born to do a noble work, and that the men, to whose hands the work was committed, were men worthy of this high election. Further, in respect of its vivifying and restoring influences, that work is one permanent as the Gospel; for it is no more or less than an effective inception, if not a full development, of the restoring agency by which the Gospel restores our weak and defaced humanity to more than its ancient

beauty, and makes "the glory of this latter house to be more than the glory of the former."

55. The durability of the school, or system, is another matter. On what may be called its scientific side, it does not seem to have, and perhaps after a hundred years it may even be deemed incapable of having, any recognized standard, theological or ecclesiastical. A large portion of its vital energies have evidently, and most beneficially, melted down, contemporaneously with the Oxford movement, into the general mass of the Church of England; while a smaller but very precious portion has likewise oozed through it into the Church of Rome, whether with the same good consequences it is not my design to judge. It may be that it is still destined to suffer from what I take to be its besetting weakness; namely, that which arises by reaction, from its promoting what I have termed individualism in a degree exceeding not only the Anglican but also the Nonconforming schemes. Whether individualism is thus largely indulged, cohesion cannot well be durable; there must be expected, as there has indeed been observed, a remarkable want of permanence in personal and family tradition, a great difficulty in encountering the controversial arms of better organized systems, and generally a disposition to the licentious use of the power, thus confided without reference to capacity or office. But it may also be that a more or less pronounced Evangelical school is still required for the general religious welfare of the Anglican Church, in order to maintain, if only by an emulation as between the men of Apollos and of Paul, the vigour and activity in the Anglican body of those "doctrines of grace," without which the salt of Christianity soon loses all its savour.

56. It is very difficult to say to what extent the case of

Tractarianism, or, as it is now more commonly called, Ritualism, may be open to analogous observations. In one important particular, a similitude seems undoubtedly to hold; namely, that the system exists not for itself only, but for what lies beyond itself. It has infected, or pervaded, the entire services of the Anglican Church, and redeemed them, at least externally, from a state of what was too often absolute degradation in a religious point of view. There are perhaps few, even of the Churches known as Evangelical, in which the services and the structural arrangements do not bear marks of the influence thus derived. Nay, it may be asked whether that same influence has not powerfully touched, in this respect, the Presbyterian and Nonconforming Churches. If so, and if the influence be beneficial, it is the return of a benefit received. For the present methods of hymnody of the English Church have, I apprehend, in substance been copied from them. And this hymnody will, I think, be admitted to contribute largely not only to the outward effect, but, which is a very different matter, to the true inward life of her services. The very remarkable "communion of hymns," so to call it, which now prevails throughout the land, is in truth one among the consolatory signs of the great amount of religious unity still subsisting, though amidst many and even important differences, in this nation.

57. It may be that this Ritualism will also lose in a manner the characteristics of a school; that what the English Church can assimilate from the materials it supplies will pervade the mass, and that of the residue some part will evaporate. I give no opinion on the proportions in which these elements subsist; nor upon the degree in which the Church of England will by this assimilation be

brought nearer to her far-distant ideal; nor upon the question whether the sinister auguries of supplying a nursery for Rome will continue in some greater or less degree to be fulfilled; or whether such fulfilment will be due to the tendencies of the system, or to the weakness or other fault of individuals, or to the treatment received at the hands of other persons or parties. For myself, I am convinced, without claiming the adhesion of any one else, that the great preparatory agent in co-operation with the Roman Church is the war now so actively waged against belief. Discrediting as well as supplanting in susceptible minds the stay they once had, and furnishing no other, the sceptical assault too often leaves a state of vacancy and hunger as well as of chaos, to which her boldness, and her confidence in the proposal of her peculiar remedies, are eminently congenial. But I think it plain that the separate existence of the school will be promoted, and its accentuation sharpened, and its tendency to supply recruits for the Latin Church promoted, by the long continuance of ineffectual attempts at legal proscription; which whet the appetite for strife, exasperate and harden the spirit of resistance, and have had a visible tendency in some degree to discredit the judicature of the country.

58. Upon the whole, I surmise that sensible men, upon surveying the field of religious action during the last half century, will consider, each from his own point of view, that the cause of truth and right has had both its victories to record, and its defeats to mourn over. It is a blessed thing to think that behind the blurred aspect of that cause, which we see as in a glass darkly, there is the eye of One to whom all is light, and who subdues to His own high and comprehensive, and perhaps for that reason remote, purposes all the partial and transitory phenomena, with

which we are so sorely perplexed. The systems or forms, under which we conceive the truth, may each present its several colours, hereafter to be blended into a perfect ray. It will not then be the most boastful or the most aggressive among them that will be found to be the least refracted from the lines of the perfect truth. It will be the one which shall best have performed the work of love, and shall have effected the largest diminution in the mass of sin and sorrow that deface a world, which came so fair from the hand of its Maker. Here there is opened to us a noble competition, wherein, each adhering firmly to what he has embraced humbly, we may all co-operate for the glory of God with a common aim; and, every one according what he asks, and according it as freely as he asks it, all may strive to cultivate the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

I will not bring this paper to a close without hazarding two remarks, more or less extraneous to its main subject.

59. In the University of its birth, the Tractarian movement laid hold, with a powerful grasp, on the intellect of its generation; which, within that precinct, it seemed at one time almost to have absorbed. It has already lived to witness a woful change in a severance less extensive, but still very marked, and, let us hope, not less transitory, of the minds holding the same relative rank among the young from the pastoral office, and the inner communion, so to call it, of the Church. This is a sad and sore mischief. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest; that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

60. Secondly, and lastly. The progressive and the subversive tendencies of our time alike heighten the necessity for a learned clergy. A devout and active clergy the Church of England happily possesses. But learning,

within the clerical body, suffers heavily from a combination of different causes: one of them the increase and varied activity of pastoral duties, another, their numerous, nay, almost innumerable, administrative cares. Some of these partake largely of a secular character; and many are such as to call for an enlarged amount of lay assistance. Why aid of this kind is not more fully rendered, is a question beyond the scope of this paper. But the evil of stinted thought and study is so great, that it is well to designate, even without discussing, it. There is, I apprehend, no room for doubt that the Nonconforming minister is able to spend a far larger share of time upon this very important department of his duties, than his brother the parochial incumbent.

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